

*Unrest and Instability in Southeastern Europe: Cold
War Insights for the 21st Century*

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ABSTRACT

This study's underlying premise is that history continues to play an important role in the daily lives of those who live in Southeastern Europe. Therefore by examining where unrest has occurred during the last 50 years and over what issues, one is likely to shed light on future hotspots in this unstable region during the 21st Century. This study looks specifically at Bulgaria and Romania—two former Warsaw Pact nations that seek entry into NATO—and explores the factors that have spurred civil and ethnic unrest, the form it has taken, where it has occurred, and the identities of the groups involved. The study's findings enhance our understanding of where and why unrest has erupted in Southeastern Europe and how this discontent has changed in Bulgaria and Romania since the end of the Cold War. This study also assesses how these changes pose new challenges for the intelligence community in predicting ethnic, social, and political conflict in this region and offers some potential tools to aid in overcoming these challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Humor and history go a long way in telling us what to expect in the Southeastern Europe during the 21st Century. The old Slavic joke on how to discern a pessimist from an optimist—the pessimist argues that things can't get any worse while the optimist is adamant that they can—summarizes succinctly what has happened in this region since the end of the Cold War. Four wars in the Balkans, the disintegration of Albania, and social unrest and economic turmoil in Bulgaria and Romania have marked the decade following the destruction of the Berlin Wall. Similarly, history, with its long roots and pervasive influence over this troubled region, helps illuminate what has transpired in these years and where conflict and upheaval may erupt in the future. As demonstrated during the last decade, historical animosities are neither forgotten nor forgiven in Southeastern Europe.

This study examines how, if at all, civil unrest in Bulgaria and Romania has changed since the collapse of the Iron Curtain. To address this question, it compares three periods of unrest in Eastern Europe—during the Cold War, in the 1989 Revolutions, and the decade following the demise of Communism. The paper explores the factors that have spurred unrest, the form it has taken, where it has occurred, and the identities of the groups involved. Conversely, it also assesses the factors that have historically served to dampen or prevent civil unrest, examining in the process the control mechanisms employed by the communist regimes in Eastern Europe during the Cold War and how they differ from the means employed by leaders today.

This study looks at Bulgaria and Romania rather than Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, or the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) for several reasons. For one, considerable scholarly attention has already been devoted to the breakup and wars in the Former Yugoslavia. But even more important in determining its focus is the greater significance either conflict or social revolution in Bulgaria or Romania would have for the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies. Bulgaria and Romania both seek full integration into NATO and the European Union (EU). Each directly share a border with one or more NATO members. Moreover, historical and religious ties to the former Soviet Union increase the likelihood of Russian involvement should either nation erupt in conflict or experience widespread civil unrest.

Potential turmoil in Bulgaria and Romania has ramifications for Western efforts in the rest of the region as well. Major unrest in either country would jeopardize the human and financial resources already invested in peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Kosovo and the funds planned as part of the Balkan Stability Pact. In addition, it might spark another refugee crisis, adding to previous waves that already burden much of Western Europe. Thus understanding and identifying where civil unrest may erupt in the region should ensure a better return on resources invested while protecting the fragile stability achieved in the Balkans. This task is especially timely given the unsettled

economic and political environment in Southeastern Europe in the wake of the war in Kosovo—conditions that previously have produced widespread unrest in Eastern Europe.

This project's significance extends beyond its findings. The methodology employed and unrest database created can be adopted and maintained by the US intelligence community. Such tools should help shed light on where likely trouble spots exist and what factors may prompt unrest, thereby enhancing Indications and Warning (I & W) capabilities and aiding crisis management efforts.

The first two chapters examine civil unrest throughout all of Eastern Europe for the period 1950-1989. Chapter One draws heavily on recently declassified western intelligence reports and archival materials from the former Communist Bloc providing a valuable baseline of unrest in Eastern Europe against which the 1990s are contrasted. In Chapter Two, a thorough review is conducted of the environment that produced the 1989 revolutions that rocked Eastern Europe and destroyed the Iron Curtain.

Chapter Three analyzes unrest in Southeastern Europe since 1989 and is the most detailed sketch drawn. This picture is constructed around a database incorporating over 1600 incidents of unrest in Bulgaria and Romania from 1990-1999, to include demonstrations/rallies, strikes, political violence/riots, protest declarations, and other anti-regime activity.¹ Drawn from Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Radio Free Europe, and other human rights watch group reporting for this period, these unrest incidents facilitate key judgments concerning continuity and change in the civil unrest in Bulgaria and Romania since the Cold War's end. This chapter also identifies those factors that have either facilitated or impeded unrest, reviewing everything from the state of the economy to the outcome and influence of previous civil unrest. This analysis likewise addresses the "control mechanisms" employed by government authorities in Eastern and Southeastern Europe and how the collapse of Communism has generated new challenges for Bulgarian and Romanian authorities in responding to and containing social unrest.

Chapter Four explores the "unrest environment" in Southeastern Europe and the challenge of forecasting where and when the next explosion may occur in the region. The chapter examines various models used in assessing the future, comparing Cold War and post-Cold War efforts. The post-Cold War model is used in turn to produce a refined list of warning indicators that should help identify potential hot spots. The chapter concludes by reviewing some of the new challenges and resources that hinder as well as aid in predicting the outbreak and severity of future unrest in Southeastern Europe.

Chapter Five highlights the increasing concern over potential future unrest and instability in Bulgaria and, in particular, Romania. While both have avoided the suffering and turmoil witnessed in Bosnia and elsewhere in the region in the 1990s, these countries have a long way to go in overcoming the enormous political, economic, and ethnic challenges they confront. In addition, the increasingly complex and tumultuous unrest environment found throughout the region has reduced warning time and made predictive analysis even more difficult. Thus, if nothing else, the results of this research

reinforce the need for increased attention and further study by the US intelligence and policy-making communities.

CHAPTER 1

UNREST IN EASTERN EUROPE—A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Role of Unrest in East European History

The impact of the past on the present is no where more apparent than in Central and Southeastern Europe. Although these countries are all relatively new nation states created in the 19th and 20th centuries, each has a rich historical legacy that has directly influenced its current status.

What then can be learned from the East European unrest arising between 1830 and 1945? What forces and factors in these years were still present after the conclusion of the Second World War? The insights revealed by the civil unrest of the 19th and early 20th century fall into three major areas—the factors prompting unrest, the groups involved, and the reasons for its failure.

Nationalism and a craving for political independence have been evident in virtually every outbreak of unrest in Eastern Europe since the 1830 uprising in Poland.² Whether of a Russian, Austrian, Turkish, or German variety, foreign domination was consistently rejected by the peoples of Eastern Europe. These efforts and the pursuit of independence were often accompanied by demands for greater political and cultural freedoms. While usually voiced by the region's intellectuals and lower gentry, such demands frequently struck a resonant chord among the East European peasantry and prompted them to follow their lead in opposing the regime. Economic grievances also played a key role in generating popular unrest. Because of the overwhelmingly agricultural nature of Eastern Europe in the 19th and first half of the 20th century, most of this economic inspired unrest was linked to peasant concerns over loss of land, exploitation, and alien rule.³ These grievances reappeared during the communist collectivization drives of the early 1950s. Likewise, it is of historical note that the factors that prompted unrest in Eastern Europe during the last two centuries have seldom appeared individually or in isolation. Demands for national independence became frequently intertwined with calls for greater political freedoms and economic justice. As such, they served to generate the support from different social, ethnic, and political groups needed to seriously challenge the ruling authorities.

The second area where historical events shed light on the recent past and the present concerns the groups involved in the unrest. Intellectuals and other leading elements of society consistently played a critical role in instigating and inciting unrest in Eastern Europe. While often motivated by different factors, the region's peasants and

urban masses usually followed their lead. Very seldom did peasants initiate or actively organize the opposition.

Perhaps the most important area, however, where lessons learned from the unrest of the 19th and early 20th centuries increase our understanding of post World War II developments in Eastern Europe lies in the reasons for its failure. Class differences and ethnic animosities, for example, contributed to the failure of uprising and resistance movements in each century. An attempt by Polish nobles in 1846 to overthrow the Austrian rulers in Galicia was frustrated when Polish peasants refused to join their “social betters” and turned on them, actively helping the Austrians to suppress the rebellion. Ethnic animosities and prejudices were a major factor in the revolution of 1848.⁴ This legacy of class and ethnic difference has left most of the region’s opposition elements divided and unorganized.

The intervention of certain foreign powers, as well as the failure of others nations to do so, also has weighed heavily in determining the success or failure of East European unrest. Russian intervention in 1848 removed any hope that the revolution might succeed. In contrast, Czarist support for Bulgarian insurgents in the Russo-Turkish War led to Bulgaria’s independence.⁵ During the first half of the 20th century, the inability or unwillingness of the West to act—especially the United States—was equally important. The West’s failure to substantially aid the Polish, Slovak, and Czech uprisings in 1944 and 1945 doomed their efforts and left a bitter taste in the mouths of many East Europeans.

The role and effectiveness of the region’s security forces is the final factor that has repeatedly exercised a critical influence on the outcome of unrest in Eastern Europe. Informers and secret police existed long before the Soviet Union imposed its rule over the area. Although neither as effective nor as reliable as their Cold War successors, these control organizations and their operatives were instrumental in alerting the East European rulers and foreign monarchs to impending unrest and in preventing such opposition forces from becoming a serious threat to their control.

The Early Cold War: From Yalta to Helsinki

The study of unrest in Eastern Europe by the US intelligence and academic communities has been underway for nearly five decades. This interest was particularly intense during the 1950s when the policies of rollback and liberation were considered and ultimately rejected by the Eisenhower Administration.⁶ Research on unrest in Eastern Europe was renewed in the early years of the Reagan Administration. This renewed interest reflected the activist foreign policies of the Reagan Administration as well as rising discontent in Eastern Europe itself.⁷ The key judgments of this body of scholarly research and formerly classified intelligence reporting provides a valuable baseline of unrest in Eastern Europe against which the post-Cold War period can be contrasted.⁸

Resistance to communist authorities in Eastern Europe was evident throughout the entire Cold War; but it was most intense during two periods separated by nearly 20 years. Consolidation of communist control between 1949 and 1958 generated the first period of significant unrest; economic decline, the election of a Polish Pope, and the passage of the Helsinki Accords all contributed to the second period—1977-1987—of turmoil.

Post War Resistance and the East German Uprising, 1948-1953

Spurred on by the “Titoist” defection of 1948, nationalist sentiments played an important role in much of the unrest between 1945 and 1953. Specific regime policies, such as the collectivization of agriculture and forced draft industrialization, also generated considerable dissatisfaction and contributed to a further drop in the already low standard of living enjoyed by the majority of those behind the Iron Curtain. Opposition to these policies was evidenced most clearly during the early 1950s, as peasants, partisans, and workers used various means to resist their implementation. This opposition culminated in June 1953 with the riots in Plzen, Czechoslovakia and East Germany that forced the reversal of regime policy and the adoption of the “New Course.”⁹

In the early Cold War, partisan groups operated in limited areas of Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria and Romania.¹⁰ Active resistance was also manifested in economic sabotage, riots, and attacks against police and communist authorities. Western intelligence documented this unrest, citing over 200 incidents of unrest in both Bulgaria and Romania during the period 1951-57, with the largest share occurring during 1951-52.¹¹ Yet the progressive consolidation of Communist power throughout East European satellites forced changes in the ways discontent was expressed. As noted in a 1958 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), active resistance moved away from partisan groups and armed resistance and was “expressed more in such forms as strikes, demonstrations, and open manifestations of intellectuals and other dissent.”¹² Changes in the nature of the groups offering resistance further accounted for the trend away from partisan action.

Between 1945 and 1947, much of the resistance encountered by the communist authorities came from the middle class and other pre-war groups seeking to protect their vested interests. Each passing year of communist rule, though, saw these elements supplanted by others, such as the peasantry. But even more significant was the emergence of Lenin’s “favored sons” in the ranks of the opposition. In fact, by 1952, industrial workers were becoming an important source of unrest in every satellite nation.

The unrest that occurred in Eastern Europe between 1945 and 1953 also illuminates several of the key factors in an environment that either encourage or discourage dissident activity. The two major eruptions of popular unrest during the period, the Czech and East German riots of June 1953, are especially illustrative of this fact. For instance, in both cases, the disturbances occurred against a backdrop of long-standing and pervasive dissatisfaction. Similarly, in each instance, steps taken by the authorities served as a catalyst to action, igniting smoldering resentments. The timing of

the Czech and East German unrest likewise was significant in that both events occurred shortly after Stalin's death, when mixed signals were being received by the East European regimes as to the exact course Moscow would follow. In the case of East Germany this uncertainly only further exacerbated existing differences within the Communist Party's leadership.¹³

Perhaps even more critical in terms of prompting the outburst in East Germany were several abrupt policy changes implemented that spring. Such changes made the communist authorities appear weak and indecisive and thus emboldened the populace and, in particular, the workers to pursue additional concessions.¹⁴ The strength and solidarity of the working classes in East Germany, along with a tradition of militancy, were other factors that contributed to the outbreak of unrest. Although not found to the same extent in Czechoslovakia, these characteristics were important ingredients behind much of the unrest in Eastern Europe during the Cold War. The June 1953 East German Uprising also highlighted the key role access to outside information plays in an unrest environment. The American sponsored Radio in the Allied Sector (RIAS) played a critical part in disseminating news of the Berlin Uprising to areas outside the city. By making known worker demands and the success of demonstrations on 16 June 1952. RIAS provided the impetus for many East Zone Germans to openly resist the regime the following day.

Recently opened archival material from the former East Germany offers additional insights. Soviet and former East Zone memoranda document the mistakes made by communist authorities in foreseeing and reacting to unrest in the GDR. It is clear that the GDR officials badly underestimated the extent and nature of dissatisfaction within their country. Instead of looking to their own actions, they repeatedly blamed western provocateurs and intelligence agencies.¹⁵ Moreover, the historical record indicates that the SED leadership was confused and reacted slowly and poorly once the unrest erupted.¹⁶

Hungary-1956

A brief examination of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution is equally instructive. Three main areas of popular dissatisfaction underlay the Hungarian Revolution. Although there is some disagreement as to the most important factor in igniting the uprising, the majority of assessments concur that cultural, political, and economic grievances were at the root of the 1956 events. Of these, economic grievances were probably the most pervasive and of the most immediate concern. Much of this economic dissatisfaction was long-standing in nature and centered on chronic shortages of consumer goods and poor working conditions. But in the 15 months immediately preceding the Hungarian Revolution, several measures instituted by the government served to increase and intensify public discontent over economic conditions. The first of such moves was Prime Minister Matyas Rakosi's abrupt ending of the New Course in the summer of 1955. In doing so Rakosi pressed forward with previously halted collectivization efforts and rescinded other economic concessions granted two years

earlier. Another government measure was the renewed emphasis on forced industrialization thereby reducing the resources devoted to the production of consumer goods. Thus, by mid-1956, the already low Hungarian standard of living dropped even further, prompting peasants and industrial workers alike to voice openly their dissatisfaction with the regime. As noted in a post-mortem analysis of the 1956 unrest in Eastern Europe by Soviet intelligence officials: "It is no accident that the unrest occurred in Hungary and Poland and not in Czechoslovakia because the standard of living is higher."¹⁷

Similar to the discontent found in the economic sphere, political dissatisfaction in Hungary was evidenced long before the 1956 Uprising. Ever since the communists gained complete control of the country in 1947, the populace had chafed at the repressive measures associated with their rule. In particular, the loss of personal and political freedoms, censorship, and the reign of terror instituted by the Hungarian secret police (AVH) all contributed to an atmosphere of fear and discontent. But unlike the economic realm where controls were tightened in 1956, Hungary experienced a significant loosening of political constraints in the months leading up to the November Revolution. This relaxation was prompted in large part by the de-Stalinization campaign begun in the aftermath of the USSR's 20th Party Congress. The net effect of the loosened political controls turned out to be the same as those of an opposite nature in the economic arena—intensified popular dissatisfaction and a new willingness to actively oppose the regime.

Nationalism was the third area critical to the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution. Here, too, the origins of popular grievances are found far back in the country's history. For centuries, Hungarians have envisioned themselves as the eastern most outpost of Western culture, surrounded by a sea of Slavs. Out of such an atmosphere developed an intense Hungarian nationalism that was manifested clearly in the 1848 Revolution that swept the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This nationalistic spirit survived well into the 20th century and was widely found among the populace despite communist efforts to suppress it. Further intensifying Hungarian nationalism as well as anti-Slav sentiments was the "Sovietization" program begun in Hungary and the other satellites in the late 1940s. This program featured Russian language training in East European schools, the introduction of Soviet advisors and uniforms into their militaries, and afforded economic exploitation through the formation of joint industrial enterprises. All these features were a direct affront to Hungarian nationalism and contributed to growing anti-Soviet sentiment within the country. But Moscow's rapprochement with Belgrade in 1955 and the acceptance of "national" communism implied by improving Soviet-Yugoslav relations was the force that brought Hungarian nationalism to the boiling point in the autumn of 1956.

Events in the international arena played a key role in creating the "environment" in which the Hungarian Revolution occurred. In the eight months immediately preceding the Revolution, Hungary was rocked by a series of foreign shocks, the most important of which were the 20th Party Congress and Nikita Khrushchev's "Secret Speech." Strong reverberations also were felt from Tito's June 1956 visit to Moscow and the Poznan Riots in Poland at the end of that month. Events in Poland during the summer and early fall

likewise were critical in shaping the expectations of the Hungarian populace and setting in motion the demonstrations that actually touched off the Revolution. Less apparent but in some ways equally significant was the influence exerted from the other side of the Iron Curtain. Overt five years of broadcasts from Voice of America and, in particular, Radio Free Europe no doubt made a marked impression on many Hungarians and served to keep alive hopes of liberation and possible Western assistance.¹⁸

Developments in the domestic realm provided the remaining ingredients present in Hungary during the fall of 1956. Of these, strife in the country's leadership and the growing discontent among the populace were the most important. Evidence of ferment within the Communist Party's ranks appeared as early as October 1955 when open criticism of the regime was voiced for the first time at a Writers' Congress. Following the CPSU's 20th Party Congress, signs of this discord became more numerous and apparent. In March 1956, Laszlo Rajk, the Hungarian leader executed in 1952 for "Titoist" deviations was rehabilitated amidst a storm of criticism directed at Rakosi and the party's current leadership. This pressure succeeded in forcing Rakosi's removal in July. The strife in the party's leadership also allowed for a relaxation of political controls and greater freedom in discussing formerly taboo issues. Playing an important role in this process was the formation of Petofi discussion circles and an increasingly lively press. Discontent among the populace in 1956, on the other hand, was not marked by as many prominent milestones; yet grumbling over long-standing economic and cultural grievances became louder and more pervasive in the months leading up to the Uprising.

Expectations among the Hungarian populace exerted an enormous influence over the events in October and November 1956. Encouraged by developments outside the country's borders as well as by events within, most Hungarians expected the autumn of 1956 to usher in improved living conditions and greater political freedom. These rising expectations were fueled by their apparent success in forcing Rakosi's dismissal and by a host of other concessions gained in the weeks before the Revolution, including the public re-interment of Rajk's remains and the abolition of compulsory Russian language training. It was in such an atmosphere that Hungarians eagerly listened to First Secretary Erno Gero's nationwide address on 23 October. Many expected additional concessions in the wake of large demonstrations conducted that day. Instead what Gero promised was new, harsher controls, not any easing of repression. In retrospect, Gero's speech, the AVH shootings at the government's radio station that evening, and the appearance of Soviet troops in the streets of Budapest all functioned as catalysts, turning peaceful demonstrations with limited ends into a full-scale revolution bent on the overthrow of the government.

Beyond the question of why Hungarians revolted is that of participation. Who confronted the Soviet tanks and led efforts to form a new government from the ashes of the communist regime? Recently released materials from western, East European, and Russian archives confirm that industrial workers, students, and the country's intelligentsia had the most prominent roles in the Hungarian Revolution. Inspired by a combination of different economic, political, and cultural grievances, these groups provided the lion's share of brains and brawn in Hungary's abortive 1956 attempt to

withdraw from the Warsaw Pact and construct a democratic society. Equally significant is what these sources reveal about those who avoided involvement or sided with the communist authorities. White-collar workers and peasants were the groups least inclined to engage in resistance activities during the revolt.¹⁹ Differences in the intensity of opposition also were discernible by geographic region. The southern and eastern halves of Hungary experienced much less unrest than the northern and western sectors. Even within these areas, resistance was concentrated primarily in urban and industrial centers and only infrequently encountered in the countryside.²⁰

Unrest Elsewhere in Eastern Europe in 1956

All of the East European nations experienced increased popular restiveness during and immediately following the Hungarian Revolution. Most of this unrest was non-violent in nature and limited to a few isolated groups. In Czechoslovakia and East Germany, university students used the developments in Poland and Hungary to push for greater political and cultural freedoms. They held protest demonstrations at several universities and distributed anti-regime leaflets. Some industrial unrest erupted in Czechoslovakia and East Germany as well. But in very few instances did worker dissatisfaction escalate beyond grumbling and take the form of strikes or other acts of opposition.

In Romania, unrest appeared among the student and industrial populations; but it was the large Hungarian minority within its borders that became the focal point of anti-regime activity in this period. Ethnic Hungarians capitalized on events in their homeland to openly challenge the government's control and push for improved treatment and greater autonomy. Demonstrations, strikes and even armed resistance occurred in some sections of Transylvania in late October and early November. Nevertheless, this unrest did not spread to the general populace and thus was easily contained by Romanian security forces.²¹

Bulgaria experienced the least fallout from the turmoil in Poland and Hungary. Despite faint rumblings among the peasantry and other indications of popular dissatisfaction, Bulgarians were not moved to openly vent their frustrations. The unrest that did occur was largely limited to the country's intelligentsia and student circles and took the form of "discussion" sessions and verbal criticism of the regime.²²

The failure of unrest to erupt on the same scale anywhere else in Eastern Europe in 1956 sheds light on a variety of factors that have historically inhibited the outbreak of civil unrest. For one, the dissension present in the leadership ranks of the Hungarian and Communist Parties was not evident to the same extent anywhere else behind the Iron Curtain during the mid-1950s. Even where dissension had been present, mitigating factors prevented a situation similar to that in Poland or Hungary from developing. In Czechoslovakia, the fact that key opposition leaders, such as Rudolf Slansky, had been executed during the earlier purges removed the possibility of a return to power along the lines followed by Wladislaw Gomulka in Poland and by Imre Nagy in Hungary.

Similarly, in East Germany, the passage of time and continued efforts at consolidation had eliminated much of the intra-party strife that contributed to the June 1953 Uprising. The more limited and slower pace at which de-Stalinization was pursued in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Romania likewise dampened ferment. The leadership in these countries did not significantly loosen controls on the public or the press and was therefore able to control criticism directed toward the country's current leadership.

Ethnic, economic, and historical factors also played important roles in inhibiting the outbreak and escalation of unrest in other East European nations. In Romania, historical animosities between Romanians and ethnic Hungarians worked to limit the support for 1956 Revolution. Romanian authorities disseminated propaganda during the uprising alleging that if it succeeded, Hungary would reclaim Transylvania and subject its Romanian inhabitants to second class status. The lack of unrest outside ethnic Hungarian areas in Romania attests to the effectiveness of such appeals. A higher standard of living, as noted above, served to limit unrest in Czechoslovakia and East Germany. The fact that industrial workers in each of these countries had fared better economically than other elements in the populace probably explains why they were not in the vanguard of any large-scale labor movement during 1956. Memories of the failed 1953 East German Uprising and the presence of the Red Army further restrained any inclination to follow in Hungary's path. The continued flow of escapees through Berlin to the West also probably removed many of most dissatisfied elements from East Germany, depriving the opposition of many individuals who might otherwise have participated in or led a revolt.

The prophylactic measures implemented by the other East European regimes to prevent or limit the spread of unrest following the Hungarian Revolution were equally important. All were a variation of the "carrot and stick" approach used by communist authorities throughout the Cold War. In many instances, trucks loaded with consumer goods preceded vehicles carrying additional security troops by only a few hours. In Romania, the regime quickly moved additional army units into Transylvania and other districts with heavy minority concentrations. While dispatched primarily to intimidate the populace, the Army did help in several instances to crush local disturbances and prevent such outbursts from escalating or spilling over into other areas.²³ At the same time, authorities in Bucharest twice lowered prices on food and other important consumer commodities. The government's behavior in Czechoslovakia followed a similar pattern. The Czechs dispatched army units to ethnic Hungarian areas in a show of force. In addition, they tightened security throughout the country and acted quickly to suppress any overt manifestation of unrest. Along with the "stick," the Czechs granted a number of economic concessions in hopes of dampening unrest.

The watershed nature of the Hungarian Revolution and its influence on the rest of Eastern Europe was not immediately clear. But with each passing year it became more apparent that the majority of East Europeans saw accommodation, not liberation, as the only viable means to improve their lot. Events in Hungary graphically demonstrated that little assistance beyond rhetoric and humanitarian aid could be expected from the West.

1968 Prague Spring

While differing in some key respects, the “Prague Spring” had much in common with the other outbreaks during the early Cold War. In Czechoslovakia, as in Hungary, Poland, and East Germany, a downturn in the nation’s economy and growing dissatisfaction over declining living standards played a key role in preparing the ground for the 1968 eruptions. Similar, too, was the manner in which public dissatisfaction over economic conditions spurred demands for and was closely linked with reforms in the political and cultural spheres.

The dissension and division within the Czechoslovak leadership also was reminiscent of that seen elsewhere in Eastern Europe in the previous decade. Concerned foremost with displacing the hated Stalinist Anton Novotny, Czechs and Slovaks, hard-liners and reformists, all joined forces within the Party to accomplish this task. But the Communist Party unleashed forces in the process that could not easily be controlled. Dubcek’s abolishment of censorship in order to use public opinion to purge Novotny and his followers illustrates that fact. Much like the relaxation in controls that occurred in the wake of Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech” and the 20th Party Congress, Dubcek’s unleashing of the Czechoslovak press and media spread ferment among the populace and quickly reawakened its political consciousness.²⁴

As in the past, events outside Czechoslovakia contributed to the country’s internal crisis. For much of the period leading up to the “Prague Spring” turmoil had been ongoing in the ranks of the Soviet leadership. Highlighted by Khrushchev’s ouster in 1964, this strife produced conditions much like those seen a decade earlier when Stalin’s death precipitated a succession struggle between Beria, Khrushchev, and Molotov. The outbreak of unrest elsewhere in Eastern Europe in 1968 also contributed to an international environment conducive to the blossoming of the “Prague Spring.” Large-scale student demonstrations in Poland during January and March 1968 were especially important. Sparked by an official ban on further presentations of a play with anti-Soviet connotations, student demonstrations broke out on university campuses throughout the country and in some cases were dispersed only after clashed with armed militia. During these protests Polish students expressed their support of the democratic changes occurring in neighboring Czechoslovakia.²⁵

US policies toward Eastern Europe also played a role in shaping the environment from which the “Prague Spring” evolved. “Bridge Building” efforts—centered on increased economic, political, and cultural contacts—served to open the eyes of East Europeans to the freedoms and standard of living enjoyed by those on the other side of the Iron Curtain. In essence, these openings provided a goal for reformers and dissidents in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere to strive toward at the same time they stimulated dissatisfaction over the failings of their own political and economic systems.

Czechoslovak history and the role of rising expectations exerted additional influences. Czechoslovakia’s democratic political traditions dating back to the 16th

century and the nation's recent experience with self-government and democracy (The First Czechoslovak Republic, 1918-1939) contributed to the demands presented during 1968. The largely non-violent and reformist, not revolutionary, nature of the "Prague Spring" likewise had historical precedent. The tale of the "Good Soldier Swiek" relates how Czechs historically have opposed their oppressors through the use of passive rather than active resistance. Heightened expectations—produced by oppositionist success in displacing First Secretary Novotny and the inclusion of many of their proposals in the party's April Action program—spurred additional action. The abolishment of censorship also affected the Czechoslovak psychological outlook, leading many to believe that creating "socialism" with a human face" was truly possible.

Beyond the similarities in environment, the "Prague Spring" and the outbursts of unrest in Eastern Europe in the 1950s shared a common link in that students and intellectuals played a leading role in the push for change. In each period it was the intelligentsia and the nation's students who were the ones most actively involved in challenging the regime. The role played by workers in the 1956 and 1968 crises also was comparable in that during both periods workers became heavily involved in opposition activity only after the ferment had proceeded quite far along.

The roles played by the participants in the crises in Eastern Europe in 1956 and 1968 point up differences between these periods as well. In contrast to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the "Prague Spring" witnessed very little overt anti-regime activity and even less violence. Moreover, in Czechoslovakia the Soviets—not the host regime—were the target of the populace's immediate outrage. Finally, while Soviet tanks were equally effective in crushing the Hungarian Revolution and the "Prague Spring," the Soviet response did not force a change in the tactics used by opposition elements in Eastern Europe. To the contrary, the "Prague Spring" set the tone for much of the unrest behind the Iron Curtain during the next decade and demonstrated the means by which it would be conducted.

The Late Cold War: 1977-1987

The passing of the "Prague Spring" brought several years of relative quiet to Eastern Europe. With the exception of a series of worker strikes and riots in Poland in late 1970, dissent and other challenges to the Communist regimes in the region declined sharply. Much of this decline was attributable to the relative economic prosperity and the relaxed political atmosphere experienced throughout the area in the early 1970s. In large part a product of Western credits and pressures to reduce East-West tensions, Eastern Europe's economic success and loosened political and cultural controls seemed to address many of the populace's key grievances.

Détente and Dissent

The conclusion of the Helsinki Conference on European Security and Cooperation (CSCE) in August 1975 represented in many ways the high mark of détente. In exchange for seemingly meaningless rhetoric on the issue of human rights, the Soviets and their allies gained continued Western financial and technical assistance and high levels of trade. Even more valuable in their eyes was the full Western acceptance of the post-war frontiers in Central and Eastern Europe contained in the document. By acceding to these boundaries, the West was, in effect, officially sanctioning Soviet and communist domination over the region.²⁶

But the widespread reemergence of dissent throughout Eastern Europe in the wake of the conference soon demonstrated that the Helsinki Accords could be as much of liability to the Soviet bloc as they were an asset. In particular, the section dealing with “humanitarian concerns” proved to be an important spark that ignited and set the tone for much of the unrest that occurred in 1977 and 1978. The Final Act, for instance, pledged signatories to “respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief...” It also required that governments ease travel restrictions so that divided families could reestablish and maintain contact as well as take steps to facilitate the freer and wider dissemination of information. This included the requirement that each participating state publish the Helsinki text, and distribute it widely among its own people. Another provision that proved irksome to the Bloc nations was the clause that called for in-country monitoring and follow-up conferences to determine just how closely the regimes were adhering to the Helsinki Accords.²⁷

Taken together, these paper guarantees were used by dissidents in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to challenge their respective regimes. Dissident activity by individuals and organized groups began in earnest during late 1976 and blossomed in the ensuing months.²⁸ Indeed, it was shortly after the New Year that one of the most important expressions of East European dissent in the post World War II period appeared in Czechoslovakia. Issued under the title of “Charter 77” and signed by some 242 individuals from varying walks of life, this manifesto called upon government authorities to abide by their own laws and halt the systematic violation of human rights ongoing in their countries.²⁹ The loosely knit group of intellectuals who had authored the charter published additional declarations pushing for the protection of religious and ethnic rights and civil liberties. The growing number of documents produced by Charter 77 was matched by a steady increase in the number of signatories expressing solidarity with the movement. By the middle of 1978, the number of signatories had grown to 1,000 despite the pressure exerted by Czechoslovak security forces to eradicate the movement.

Charter 77’s influence was not limited to Czechoslovakia’s borders. Dissidents in other East European nations expressed their solidarity with the group by publishing public letters of support and conducting protest acts of their own. In Romania, dissident Paul Goma focused the world’s attention on a wide range of human rights violations. First provoking the regime’s ire in February 1977 by his public support of Charter 77, Goma continued to arouse government disfavor by issuing a petition, signed by several

hundred supporters, demanding that human rights be protected. During the next year Goma and his followers employed hunger strikes, written publications, and other means to dramatize the populace's oppressed condition. While most of those involved in Goma's movement were concerned primarily with emigration and consequently labeled "passport dissidents," their willingness to challenge the Ceausescu regime and press for the rights guaranteed under the Helsinki Accords was especially significant in a country where discontent was infrequently manifested in open opposition.³⁰

Not even Bulgaria was spared from the spread of dissent in 1977 and 1978. Although on a much smaller scale, a dissident movement emerged in Bulgaria patterned after Czechoslovakia's Charter 77. News of the organization "ABD" first reached the West in April 1978 after dissidents smuggled out an appeal entitled "Declaration 78." This document protested against the suppression of human rights by the communist regime and called for greater personal and political freedoms; but its restricted distribution within Bulgaria limited its effect. Nevertheless, Bulgaria did witness occasional expressions of dissent, primarily among its intelligentsia and student populations, in the months after the document appeared.

Overall the dissidence and opposition activity that emerged in the aftermath of the 1975 Helsinki Conference proved to be important in its scope and nature. Coming after years of relative quiet in the region, this dissidence clearly illustrated that the political consciousness of key elements of the East European populace had been reawakened. Moreover, it continued a trend of seeking to reform, not replace, the communist system begun a decade earlier, as East European dissidents tried to force communist authorities to grant them the freedoms legally guaranteed in their countries' constitutions and in signed international agreements. Yet the true significance of these dissidents, their demands, and methods becomes only apparent after examining the 1989 revolutions that destroyed the Iron Curtain.

Labor Unrest in Eastern Europe

The late 1970s also witnessed growing restiveness among the region's workers. Spurred by a downturn in the economies behind the Iron Curtain at the same time that popular expectations were rising, worker frustrations became increasingly manifested in anti-regime activity. Commodity price increases sparked a rash of worker strikes and violence throughout Poland in June 1976.³¹ But the aftermath of the June riots proved in many ways to be even more significant than the disturbances themselves. In the days that followed, Polish students and intellectuals voiced their solidarity with the workers and their objectives. This rhetoric was transformed into action shortly thereafter when the Committee to Defend the Workers (KOR) was created to defend the workers being tried by the state for their actions during the June riots. Also coming to the aid of the workers was Poland's Catholic Church. Thus the June 1976 disturbances brought together three of the most important streams of Polish dissidence that would later play such a key role in the creation of Solidarity and a free Poland.

Coal miners in Romania rose next to challenge their communist masters. Close to 35,000 miners in the country's enormous Jiu Valley mines struck on 1 August 1977, seeking changes to their pensions and sickness benefits and demanding that the country's President Nicolae Ceausescu come in person to negotiate on these issues. Ceausescu initially dismissed the demands and dispatched his economic minister to threaten the strikers—but he was taken prisoner and calls for the President's presence were reiterated. By 3 August the situation had deteriorated to the point that Ceausescu was flown in to meet with the strikers. Ceausescu acquiesced under pressure to a number of the demands and promised action on the others if the miners would return to work. The miners accepted the President's pledges and ended their strike later that day.³²

The resolution of the Jiu Valley strike in August 1977 did not signal the end to labor unrest in Eastern Europe. Although not on the same scale as the disturbances in Poland or the unrest in Romania, strikes, demonstrations, and economic sabotage were used with increased frequency throughout the region for the next decade, laying the groundwork in many ways for the momentous autumn of 1989. These protests were sparked in most cases by the increased work norms and price hikes instituted by East European regimes to cope with deteriorating economic conditions.

Poland and the Solidarity Crisis

The rise of the Polish trade union Solidarity marked the third and, as events in 1989 would show, the most significant eruption of unrest in Eastern Europe in the post-World War II period. No where else did an opposition organization arise on such a scale or exert the influence it did for such an extended period of time. Formally established in the summer of 1980, the independent trade union influenced events in Poland even after martial law was declared in December 1981.

The factors leading to the emergence and growth of Solidarity mirror those seen before in Eastern Europe. A declining economy and standard of living was felt even more sharply in Poland coming after several years in which high growth rates and the importation of large quantities of consumer goods had boosted the populace's expectations. Strife also reemerged within the ranks of the Polish Communist Party, as in-fighting broke out between moderates bent on pushing through modest economic and political reforms and hard-liners more concerned with keeping dissent well in hand and maintaining close ties with the USSR. This discord resulted in government policies that were hesitant and often at cross-purposes. Poland's fervid nationalism was reinforced by the election in October 1978 of Warsaw's Cardinal Karol Wojtyla as the first non-Italian to head the Catholic Church in centuries. Finally, international factors, including drift in the Soviet leadership, a US foreign policy emphasizing human rights, the growth of Eurocommunism, and dissent elsewhere in Eastern Europe, prepared the ground for Solidarity's rise.

It was the government's announcement of price increases that touched off labor protests in Poland in July and August 1980. While scattered and isolated at the outset,

these protests took on a new tenor in mid-August after the creation of inter-factory strike committees.³³ Just as the unrest itself expanded and was transformed, so, too, were the demands of the workers. Concerned initially with primarily economic issues, such as the price hikes and working conditions, the workers' agenda was soon broadened to include a number of openly political demands. Strikers called for the legalization of independent trade union, the lifting of censorship in the press, and the release of imprisoned dissidents. In addition, they pushed for a strengthening of the position of Poland's Catholic Church and urged changes in government priorities in social welfare. Many of these demands were satisfied with the signing of the 30 August Gdansk Accords.

Yet Solidarity's establishment brought continued conflict, not conciliation, to the Polish nation. Labor disputes and the struggle for political power resulted in nearly continuous strife during the next 18 months. By October 1981 the inability of the union's national leaders to control its various branches and stop the repeated strikes had begun to undermine public support for the movement and its objectives.³⁴ Militant proposals to create a "workers militia" for use in establishing a "provisional national government" aided communist authorities in their campaign to portray Solidarity as "counter revolutionary" and a threat to Poland's national security. The Military Council of Salvation cited such dangers in imposing martial law on 13 December and arresting Solidarity's leadership. Martial law prompted strikes and demonstrations throughout Poland, with the most intense unrest occurring in Gdansk and Warsaw. Even so, the scale and nature of the unrest that erupted in Poland's streets in December 1981 was a far cry from that seen during the previous explosions in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Not only was there much less resistance in Poland but there were also far fewer cases of violence and loss of life. This was probably due in part to the speed with which Solidarity and anti-regime resistance was crushed and a conscious effort by Solidarity to avoid violence.³⁵

Solidarity's significance for Eastern Europe was not apparent immediately. Certainly the fact that an opposition organization as powerful as Solidarity had arisen at all behind the Iron Curtain and survived for 15 months was evident. Yet for at least five years after martial law's imposition, many East European analysts were most impressed by the ease and rapidity with which Solidarity had been destroyed. Post-crisis analyses emphasized the effectiveness of Polish security forces, divisions within the Solidarity, and the power embodied by the threat of Soviet intervention. Only in the decade since communism collapsed has the true importance of Solidarity's membership, its demands, and the means it used to pursue them been recognized.

Ethnic Unrest in a Socialist Utopia

Ethnic unrest proved less of a problem for communist authorities in Eastern Europe than one might have expected given war and violence in the Balkans since the destruction of the Berlin Wall. Ethnic unrest, while evident throughout the Cold War, was usually isolated and generally well controlled. Aided by the population transfers generated by the Second World War and national boundaries redrawn in its aftermath,

communist authorities were even more effective in controlling the region's ethnic minorities than they were with the overall population. East European regimes employed a mix of "carrot" and "stick" and "divide and conquer" policies to maintain "fraternal solidarity" and counter potential ethnic threats.

Romanian communists quickly recognized the potential vulnerability posed by the presence of a significant German and Hungarian minority. Efforts were made to co-opt these groups by using them in disproportionate numbers in the security forces.³⁶ Nonetheless, the treatment afforded ethnic Hungarians and, to a lesser extent, Germans was an important factor behind anti-regime activity during the Cold War.³⁷ Romanian fears of Hungarian separatism—fears fueled by the 1956 Hungarian Revolution—led to the adoption of a number of measures designed to placate this key group, among these the establishment of a Hungarian language university and the creation of a semi-autonomous region in Transylvania.³⁸ Emigration to West Germany, on the other hand, largely solved Romania's "German" problem.

Efforts by Bulgarian authorities to forcibly assimilate the country's sizable ethnic Turk and Pomak (Bulgarian Muslims) minorities sparked ethnic unrest at several junctures during the Cold War. The Bulgarian government's 1984 decision to launch a nationwide "regeneration" process to "slavicize" the country's large Turkish minority and restrict its religious practices was by far the most significant of these efforts. This repressive campaign generated riots and sabotage and forced the deployment of Ministry of Interior troops throughout much of the country.³⁹

1945-1987 in Retrospect

This review of the major crises in Eastern Europe during the Cold War has provided numerous insights into the factors spurring unrest, its nature, where it occurred, and the identifies of those involved. It also has shed light on many of the forces that have served to facilitate or, conversely, inhibit civil unrest.

Yet analysis and aggregation of individual unrest incidents in four East European countries in the early and late Cold War enhances this understanding even further. The countries examined—Bulgaria, Romania, East Germany, and Hungary—represent the northern and southern tiers of the former Warsaw Pact and are probably representative of most of Eastern Europe.

Analysis of nearly 700 unrest incidents in these nations over the two periods demonstrates that economic grievances have been the forces most responsible for civil unrest in Eastern Europe since the end of the Second World War. Data compiled on known unrest incidents in Romania and Hungary from 1977-1985 reveal that approximately 50% of the unrest incidents that transpired in these countries were tied to unhappiness over work conditions or shortages of consumer goods. Fragmentary data from the 1950s documents a similar trend.

Incident analysis also illustrates that factors other than economics played an important role in generating civil unrest. The data for Bulgaria confirms how important minority and religious issues have been spurring disturbances in some countries. The Bulgarian government's campaign to "assimilate" its Turkish minority accounted for close to 50% of the unrest in that nation during the late Cold War. Even in Romania, where economic concerns predominated, the treatment afforded ethnic minorities has been an important force in precipitating anti-regime activity, linked to almost 20% of the incidents identified. Nationalism and the desire for political freedom also sparked unrest. This was especially evident in the years immediately following the imposition of communist rule, when the Soviets and their satellites brutally suppressed any nationalist expression and eliminated most political rights.

Changes in the frequency and nature of anti-regime activity in Eastern Europe over this 40-year period are evident from incident analysis as well. Opposition in general and violent resistance in particular—excepting the 1956 Hungarian Revolution—declined after 1953. For example, the numbers of strikes, riots, protests, and acts of political/economic violence and written/verbal unrest in Bulgaria in the early 1950s alone was nearly twice the figure found for the entire 1970s and much of the 1980s. Similarly, a move away from violent, open opposition to largely nonviolent and less threatening forms of protest also occurred, probably reflecting the lessons learned and lives lost during the East German and Hungarian Uprisings.⁴⁰

And who participated in and led this unrest? During the early Cold War, remnants of each country's middle class, peasants, workers from their heavy industries, and intellectuals and students were the groups most likely to be involved in anti-regime activity.⁴¹ By the late 1970s, however, peasants and bourgeoisie elements had long since disappeared as a major source of opposition. Singled out for subjugation by the communist regimes in the immediate post-war period, the peasantry ultimately acquiesced. Similarly, the East European bourgeoisie was replaced with a new middle class with vested interests in preserving, not opposing communist rule.

Despite some variation, the prominent part played by workers and intellectuals continued during the latter Cold War as well. In Romania, the voices most frequently raised in protest to Ceausescu's brutal policies were those of Jiu Valley miners, factory workers, and Charter 77 dissidents, such as Paul Goma. In Bulgaria, while less significant, the limited unrest that did transpire prior to the 1984 "regeneration" campaign was also linked to dissident and labor elements. Students, who had played a large and critical role in the unrest that swept across Eastern Europe in 1956, appear to have played a much less important role in this second period.⁴²

Unrest in Southeastern and Eastern Europe occurred in largely the same areas throughout the Cold War. With the exception of the years between 1951 and 1953 when communist collectivization campaigns elicited widespread opposition in the East European countryside, the majority of incidents have transpired in the region's largest cities, in its ethnic enclaves, and at its industrial enterprises and university centers.⁴³ Analysis of available incidents for Bulgaria and Romania in the years 1951-1957 and

1977-1985 reveals a strong correlation between unrest hotspots—ethnic as well as economic—in each era. In fact, a 60% correlation exists between the areas of overall greatest and least unrest in Bulgaria and in Romania during the two time periods.⁴⁴ The same is true of issue specific unrest in each country. The counties that experienced widespread ethnic disturbances in the 1950s were the same ones in which ethnic unrest was most prominent in the 1970s and 1980s.⁴⁵ Likewise, in Romania, the nation's factories and mines hosted the majority of economic unrest in each period.

Lastly, this examination of the hundreds of unrest incidents spanning the Cold War attests to the strength and resiliency of the spirit of resistance behind the Iron Curtain. Despite widespread repression and state-sponsored violence, East Europeans never discarded their desire to live in a free society. The 1958 NIE issued in the aftermath of the Hungarian Revolution correctly observed that “the regime’s counter-weapons—primarily the monopoly of physical force (coupled with an evident willingness to use it) and a near monopoly of means of communication—will remain formidable.”⁴⁶ But it, like numerous other assessments after it, underestimated the depth of this dissatisfaction. The 1989 Revolutions that swept across Eastern Europe and ended the Cold War illustrated the degree to which this spirit of resistance had survived.

CHAPTER 2

1989 REVOLUTIONS

Approaching Storm Clouds, 1987-1988

The imposition of martial law in Poland and destruction of the trade union Solidarity provided only a brief respite for communism in Eastern Europe. The problems that sparked unrest in the preceding decade—economic decline, ethnic strife, and demands for greater religious and political freedoms—were only exacerbated by discord within the bloc's leadership, ideological drift, and fallout from Gorbachev's reform policies.

National Intelligence Estimate 11/12-9-88—*Soviet Policy Toward Eastern Europe Under Gorbachev*—assessed these developments and examined several potential scenarios for change in Eastern Europe. General Secretary Gorbachev's policies, the NIE concluded, had increased the potential for instability in Eastern Europe at the same time they afforded new possibilities for revolutionary reform in the region.⁴⁷

NIE 11/12-9-88 was quite accurate in its assessment of what might happen in Eastern Europe. It asserted that “the likelihood of multiple, simultaneous upheavals is higher than it has been in more than 30 years.”⁴⁸ The intelligence assessment was equally incisive in identifying why these developments might occur. A general increase of anti-regime activism was likely, it predicted, due to a climate of openness and greater willingness to test the limits of regime tolerance. Human rights, religious, pacifist, environmentalist, and other groups—already active in most of Eastern Europe—would grow more assertive and cooperation would increase among Hungarian, Czech, and Polish dissidents. NIE 11/12-9-88 noted that several of the usual instability indicators—discontent over living standards, weak and divided leadership, social unrest—were evident. New shocks, it warned—such as severe austerity measures, the death or ouster of a top party leader, or the emergence of an organized and emboldened opposition—could bring about serious instability, particularly in Poland, Romania, and Hungary. Yet Soviet force, NIE 11/12-9-88 prophetically asserted, would be the ultimate controlling factor on change in Eastern Europe.⁴⁹

NIE 11/12 identified three possible scenarios for Eastern Europe. The first involved the potential for popular upheaval in Poland, Romania, or Hungary by a broad-based challenge to party supremacy and ultimately to Soviet control. A second scenario envisioned sweeping reform in Hungary or Poland going beyond Gorbachev's agenda. The third was a conservative backlash, involving open repudiation of Soviet policies by

orthodox leaders in East Germany, Romania or elsewhere. NIE 11/12-9-88 argued that of these, popular upheaval was the most likely contingency.⁵⁰

NIE 11/12-9-88 was off-the-mark on the timing of these changes and, more importantly, on the willingness of the Soviets to employ force to limit change. It had concluded that none of the more extreme scenarios was likely in the near future, but that their probability would increase over the next three to five years.⁵¹ But NIE 11/12-9-88—not unlike other contemporary assessments—failed to foresee Gorbachev’s abandonment of the Brezhnev Doctrine. While acknowledging that Gorbachev would face greater constraints than his predecessors against intervening militarily in Eastern Europe, the intelligence assessment concluded that there was “no reason to doubt his willingness to intervene to preserve party rule and decisive Soviet influence.”⁵²

By May 1988 it was even clear that the most significant possibility of widespread violence existed in Romania.⁵³ Although NIE 11/12-9-88 conceded that unrest had remained isolated and Romanian security forces were well equipped to quell protests, it did point to growing ferment within the communist party. Thus it identified that the three most likely scenarios for change in Romania involved Ceausescu’s death or incapacitation, a palace coup, or a brushfire of popular unrest.

The Velvet Revolutions

The only thing more significant than communism’s demise is the manner in which it occurred. The near absence of violence stood in sharp contrast to the earlier revolts and uprisings. The large body of literature on the momentous events of 1989 reflects this emphasis.⁵⁴ It also recognizes communism’s end came in different ways and times in Eastern Europe. For Hungary and Poland, Communism’s death came by choice and miscalculation. In East Germany and Czechoslovakia, the power of the people and popular protest successfully brought down the Berlin Wall and gave meaning to the term “Velvet Revolution.”

The communist parties in Hungary and Poland recognized that the time for reform was at hand. Rather than resist change, they joined in it hoping to avoid conflict and preserve power. In Poland, the Communist Party agreed to hold free parliamentary elections and allow Solidarity to run its own candidates in return for the trade union’s cooperation in the task of economic reform.⁵⁵ This decision came back to haunt the Communist Party as the June 1989 elections saw the party voted out of office. Stalling efforts bought time for the communists but Poland’s first non-communist Prime Minister in post-World War II history—Tadeusz Mazowiecki—was installed on 24 August 1989.⁵⁶ Poland set the tone for rest of Eastern Europe in 1989. As Mazowiecki observed a decade later: “It is not understood well enough that if these changes had failed in our country, if we had not been able to conduct them as we did, in a peaceful way, avoiding all very dangerous provocations from the other side. . . . I think it would have made things difficult for [the United States] and the other countries.”⁵⁷

Hungary's Communist Party had also seen the need for reform and began working with the opposition in 1987. Formerly "secret" transcripts of discussions between Soviet leader Gorbachev and Hungary's General Secretary Grosz in March 1989 reveal a strong desire to retain political power as well as to avoid armed conflict.⁵⁸ Grosz stressed similar themes during national roundtable negotiations held in June. He argued that Hungary must find a peaceful transition to representative democracy; we must "observe our obligations towards our allies; at the same time, we are striving to create a Europe without blocs." It was not enough, according to him, to resign using instruments of oppression, the possibility of using them must be excluded.⁵⁹ Four months later, in October 1989, the Hungarian Party dissolved itself and entered free elections as the Socialist Party.⁶⁰

Unlike Poland and Hungary, the communist leaders in East Germany and Czechoslovakia were unwilling partners to the events of 1989. The long-standing economic and political problems that had required the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961 were greatly exacerbated by Budapest's September 1989 decision to open its border with Austria and allow free passage out of the country to those who desired. This decision prompted tens of thousands of East Germans to flee to Hungary. The East German regime's decision to ban travel to Hungary stopped this exodus but those seeking freedom responded by taking refuge at West German embassies in Prague and Warsaw. Shortly thereafter, all travel was banned.⁶¹

The flight from the GDR was accompanied by widespread demonstrations against communist rule. Originating in and supported by the East German churches, these protests grew in size and scope, going from a few hundred demonstrators at weekly marches in the city of Leipzig in May to 100,000 or more protestors by mid-October at rallies nationwide.⁶² Eric Honecker—the Warsaw Pact's longest ruling Party chief—initially sought to crush the demonstrations by force.⁶³ But Soviet President Gorbachev made clear during his October 1989 visit marking the 40th anniversary of the East German state that Honecker and widespread repression would not be supported. Honecker's dismissal and replacement by Egor Krenz only inspired additional and larger protest actions that culminated in the opening of the Berlin Wall on 9 November.⁶⁴

Czechoslovakia's experience in 1989 was linked in many ways to East Germany. East German asylum seekers had clashed with their own police in Prague during October in a desperate effort to reach the West German Embassy. Czechoslovaks also viewed at close range the growing protest marches in this neighboring Warsaw Pact member. On 28 October, the 71st anniversary of the founding of Czechoslovakia, some 20,000 protestors took the streets of Prague and were met by police water cannons and armored personnel carriers.⁶⁵ Demonstrations following in the aftermath of the opening of the Berlin Wall were likewise initially met with force. But hard-liners in Czechoslovak leadership—like their East German counterparts—were without Soviet support. Facing daily protests drawing up to 700,000 demonstrators demanding an end to communism, Premier Adamec ultimately acquiesced, swearing in a new government on 10 December and preparing the way for Vaclav Havel's election as President.⁶⁶

Incomplete and Bloody: Bulgaria and Romania

The “velvet revolutions” in Bulgaria and Romania was neither as smooth nor as far-reaching as those that occurred to their north, resembling more of a coup in both countries. Communism’s demise came without violence in Bulgaria. But that was not the case in Romania, where blood flowed in the streets of Timisoara, Bucharest, and other cities.

While Bulgaria experienced less unrest than any other East European nation in 1989, it certainly was affected by the momentous changes elsewhere in the region. The impetus for change came from within the Communist Party. Following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, Communist Party leader Todor Zhivkov—Bulgaria’s ruler for 35 years—was arrested and charged with corruption. Bulgaria’s new leadership announced it would hold democratic elections in the middle of 1990 in an effort to address the demands voiced in a growing number of protests in the nation’s largest cities.⁶⁷

The December Revolution that ultimately ended the Ceausescu dynasty was long in the making. Unrest had been on the rise in Romania for over a decade, punctuated by major outbreaks of labor unrest in the Jiu Valley mines and Brasov.⁶⁸ Economic deprivation, caused in large part by Ceausescu’s fanatical desire to repay the nation’s foreign debt, was exacerbated by his countrywide “systematization” campaign. This campaign, including efforts to nationalize procreation and “rebuild” Romania’s cities and towns, only increased discontent among the people and their communist leaders.⁶⁹ This became apparent in March 1989 when six former leaders signed a statement denouncing Ceausescu.⁷⁰ The success of other East Europeans in toppling their oppressors further contributed to a fertile environment for the December events.⁷¹

The attempted removal of an ethnic Hungarian priest from his parish in the western Romanian city of Timisoara sparked riots on 15 December that soon spread to Bucharest and other cities while demands expanded to cries for freedom.⁷² The inability and later unwillingness of Romanian security forces to control the protests, along with critical miscalculations by Ceausescu and his wife, transformed the protests into a revolution that engulfed the country. The turning point occurred on 21 December when a rally organized in support of Ceausescu degenerated into a riot and forced Romania’s leader to flee the capital. Ceausescu’s flight sparked a coup by former supporters, who joined elements of the opposition to form the National Salvation Front. In the days that followed, spontaneous protests, alleged counter revolutionary attacks by Romanian security police (*Securitate*) provocateurs and “defensive” actions by the National Salvation Front culminated in the executions of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu and the deaths of an estimated 1000 Romanians.⁷³

Understanding the Collapse and the Unrest Environment

The reasons for Communism's collapse in Eastern Europe are many, complex, and interrelated. While a number of these factors had been seen before during the Cold War, the unrest environment in 1989 was unique. Identifying and assessing the political, economic, and security environment in 1989 thus is essential to understanding how these revolutions succeeded when others—such as the Hungarian Revolution and Prague Spring—had failed.

The importance of these revolutions extends beyond the destruction of Communism. These revolutions are critical to understanding what has happened in Bulgaria, Romania, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe in the ten years since the Berlin Wall fell at the same time that they offer insight into what may transpire in the next decade.

Economic decline, as already described, provided a fertile base for discontent throughout Eastern Europe. Shortages of food, clothing, and other necessities, price increases, and the specter of heretofore unheard of unemployment gave rise to occasional outbursts of unrest and rising consumer dissatisfaction in every East European nation.⁷⁴

But the 1989 Revolutions that brought down Communism were, as one scholar noted, “not only about consumption.” They were also about “freedom: freedom of speech and thought, freedom of worship, freedom from arbitrary treatment by the state, freedom to live one's life as one chooses.”⁷⁵ As illustrated so well in Romania, the removal of an ethnic Hungarian priest from his parish—not a price increase or a food shortage—ignited the unrest that ended the Ceausescu dynasty. Yet the resilient desire for freedom that had survived four decades of communist oppression was greatly aided by other political forces that became increasingly evident in the last days of the Cold War.

Apathy and disillusionment in the ranks of Communism's true believers was one such force. Ideological erosion in Eastern Europe gave rise to new independent social groups and to a resurgence of national consciousness throughout the region that helped prepare the ground for the political forces that played a more prominent role in 1989. Stagnation among the aging communist party leadership in Eastern Europe and impending leadership changes likewise contributed to an overall atmosphere of uncertainty and desire for change.⁷⁶

An apparent lack of political will and leadership further inhibited the actions of several East European governments during the fateful autumn of 1989.⁷⁷ This was particularly true in East Germany and Czechoslovakia where the regimes settled for half measures, neither fully embracing reform nor committing themselves to the repression required to crush growing unrest.⁷⁸ As one former East German border guard noted: “I could see that we were directionless, that the leadership had lost control.”⁷⁹ In

Czechoslovakia, the secret police, riot police, Interior Ministry troops and the army all waited in vain for the orders to act; but the orders never came.⁸⁰

While the problems afflicting the East European leadership were reflected throughout the communist system, the most significant fallout was evident in the security services that Party leaders had traditionally relied on to retain control. Not since the 1953 East German Uprising had the reliability of the security services been an issue; but police officials in several East European nations made it clear that they could not rely upon their officers and men to obey orders.⁸¹ Perhaps David Fromkin, in an OP-ED piece for the *New York Times*, put it best when he wrote: “The Berlin Wall—and other Soviet walls, both real and metaphorical—came tumbling down because nobody believed in them strongly enough to defend them anymore.”⁸²

Forces beyond Eastern Europe’s borders had an even greater influence on what occurred during 1989. Foremost among these were those emanating from Moscow. As noted in NIE 11/12-9-88, Gorbachev’s ambitious agenda for Eastern Europe had only served to exacerbate the region’s political and economic problems because it was neither broad nor deep enough to remedy underlying systemic weaknesses. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* “accentuated divisions within the Eastern European leaderships and awakened a combination of popular hopes and anxieties about impending change.”⁸³

More than anything else, the change in the attitude of the Soviet leadership toward political and economic diversity in Eastern Europe and the threat posed by the West was what distinguished 1989 from 1953, 1956, 1968, and 1981. The Soviet Union’s fateful decision to adhere to the “Sinatra” vice the Brezhnev Doctrine, thereby forswearing armed intervention, assured the success of the 1989 “Velvet Revolutions.”⁸⁴ Following Brezhnev’s death, the Soviet leadership had begun to recognize the burdens of their empire, viewing the East European satellites as a liability rather than an asset. While this probably accounts in part for abandoning the Brezhnev Doctrine, other factors were involved. General Vernon Walters, the US ambassador to West Germany in 1989, pointed to the USSR’s announcement to evacuate Afghanistan without victory as a clear indicator that the Soviet government was no longer inclined to use violence to repress dissidence in Central Europe.⁸⁵ Whether Gorbachev recognized the full significance of this decision is still not clear. According to Anatoly Dobrynin, Gorbachev’s former Ambassador to the US: “I believe that Gorbachev never foresaw that the whole of Eastern Europe would fly out of the Soviet orbit within months or that the Warsaw Pact would crumble so soon.”⁸⁶

American actions shaped the 1989 unrest environment in Eastern Europe as well. The US through its political leverage—holding East-West relations hostage to Soviet acceptance of self-determination in this region—spurred peaceful change. This, according to Robert Hutchings, Director for European Affairs within the National Security Council in 1989, was the most important action the US took in helping bring about the end of the Cold War. As he asserted, while the US did not cause the momentous events in 1989, it did help create an international environment conducive to

success.⁸⁷ Indeed, fear of international sanctions influenced the decision to limit the force used against demonstrators in at least one instance during the fall of 1989.⁸⁸

Unrest elsewhere in Eastern Europe was another critical variable critical in the environment in which 1989 Revolutions occurred. The “spillover effect” was felt in at least two ways in 1989. For one, the mass demonstrations in East Germany and the exodus of East Germans asylum seekers to the West through Hungary in September and October 1989 served as a superb example to the Czechs and other East Europeans. The massive, peaceful civil disobedience used by the East Germans demonstrated how the “people” could force a Soviet bloc satellite to rein in its security forces and gain freedom.⁸⁹ But beyond providing a role model, “spillover” unrest exerted a cumulative impact. The success of demonstrators in one country quickly inflamed the passions of citizens in neighboring states who hoped for similar concessions from their own government.⁹⁰ The “spillover effect” was even stronger in 1989 than had been the case in previous uprisings during the Cold War in large part because of the lack of solidarity among the East European satellites and absence of Soviet intervention.

Forces, such as the media, intensified and accelerated the revolutionary process.⁹¹ Unlike in the past when communist authorities had been able to largely isolate their nations from the outside world, technology and politics made this nearly impossible in 1989. Television and radio from West Germany, Yugoslavia, and even other Warsaw Pact members broadcast the demands and achievements of the Poles, Hungarians and East Germans to restive peoples in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Romania.

The ability of the opposition elements to put aside their differences and unite in protest against the communist authorities was equally critical. The coalescence of multiple groups and issues proved particularly daunting. The sheer size of the protest rallies posed problems for security officials heretofore not seen. In East Germany and later in Czechoslovakia, mass demonstrations exceeded 100,000 on several occasions. As General Wojciech Jaruzelski, the Polish leader during martial law, noted: “We had not anticipated the mass character of the movement. We had faced the intelligentsia in 1968, workers in 1970, but never both of them together and never in the presence of a Polish pope. You could describe it as an earthquake.”⁹²

A variety of other factors contributed to the “earthquake” that rocked Eastern Europe in 1989. An active peace and anti-nuclear movement—spurred in part by the nuclear meltdown at Chernobyl in 1986, Western economic prosperity, and even “rock and roll” helped bring an end to communism in Eastern Europe.⁹³ “Lady luck” played a role too, particularly on the timing of the 1989 events. At that juncture, the US was dealing with a Soviet leadership still strong enough to override hard-line opponents domestically but too weak to offer meaningful resistance to the precipitous loss of empire.⁹⁴

The fears and expectations of the East European populace were likewise integral to the environment in which the Berlin Wall and Communism were destroyed. Fear of the pervasive secret police and their informers had historically served to block East Europeans from acting.⁹⁵ But success in challenging the region’s security forces and

increasing evidence that the secret police were neither as pervasive nor as effective as believed helped dissipate this fear and spurred further protests. This was particularly true in Czechoslovakia and East Germany, where the size of protest rallies grew exponentially. At the same time, nearly four years of Gorbachev's policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* and his open disdain for many of the region's hard-line leaders led many to expect greater freedoms and better economic times. When neither appeared, dissatisfaction and the willingness to challenge the remaining communist regimes in Eastern Europe increased.

A series of "sparks" ignited the East European tinderbox in 1989. Not unlike similar instances that had touched off unrest during the past—the 1953 East German Uprising, the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, and the 1980-81 Solidarity Crisis in Poland—these incidents served to unite opposition elements and energize resistance. In Czechoslovakia, the "spark" occurred during a 17 November demonstration in Prague, when an undercover security agent posed as dead. Rather than undermining the opposition, the "death" spurred outrage among students and actors and led to a week-long strike and even larger demonstrations. Crowds grew from 10,000 to 700,000 in less than a week.⁹⁶ Hungary's decision to open its border with Austria spurred thousands of East Germans to flee and added fuel to a growing East German protest movement.⁹⁷ The opening of the Berlin Wall had a similar effect. While the intent had been to open a "safety valve" and relieve the tension through what amounted to selective expulsions, the effect was quite different. The idea proved disastrous, the former Berlin border guard commander pointed out, "because people got the impression that if they shouted loudly enough, they would be allowed out."⁹⁸ Multiple sparks flew in Romania. The attempt to forcibly remove the ethnic Hungarian pastor from his parish in Timisoara and the bloodshed that followed initially ignited nationwide protests. But the declaration of a state of emergency on 22 December and the announcement of Defense Minister Milea's alleged suicide proved critical to undermining any remaining support for Ceausescu, particularly among the Romanian military.⁹⁹

Overall, the environment that spawned the 1989 Revolutions in Eastern Europe had much in common with those preceding other crises behind the Iron Curtain. Economic problems, divisions in country's leadership, international influences, and the public expectations all formed an interactive and dynamic environment that produced unrest on a scale only seen previously during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

Yet 1989 was unlike any previous unrest environment in certain, key ways. 1989 was infused with the additional burden of a four-decade communist legacy, a legacy not valued by the East European leadership or its people. Even more significant and different was the USSR's failure to either threaten or employ military force to support the East European regimes. This real as well as psychological threat had served throughout the Cold War to limit change in Eastern Europe. Application by Moscow of the Brezhnev vice Sinatra Doctrine would have undoubtedly limited the extent and success of the 1989 revolutions and greatly increased their human cost. Media technology also enhanced opposition protests while undermining regime efforts to isolate unrest in a manner and scale not seen before. Greater and more detailed information on protest efforts

throughout Eastern Europe served as a force multiplier, encouraging the opposition and exposing to the world Communism's oppressive nature.

Patterns of Unrest

Similarities and differences in the 1989 unrest environment in Eastern Europe from previous crises during the Cold War are reflected at the individual incident level as well.

Analysis of several hundred incidents in Bulgaria, Romania, and East Germany confirms that political factors were the primary force driving unrest in this critical year. Economic, ethnic, and even ecological issues played a role; but these demands invariably were subsumed into a larger effort to replace Communism.

Unrest data for 1989 also documents a further turn from violence. As already noted, the revolutions that destroyed the Iron Curtain in 1989, with the exception of Romania, were waged peacefully and with little loss of life. The widespread, massive peaceful protests used by opposition elements in East Germany and in Czechoslovakia became the hallmark of "Velvet Revolution" and made the use of force by communist authorities problematic.¹⁰⁰ 1989 unrest data for East Germany, for example, finds that peaceful protest actions were used in over 95% the unrest incidents noted.¹⁰¹

Those who led and participated in the 1989 Revolutions are not unfamiliar, although there were some changes from previous crises in Eastern Europe due to the passage of time and the revolution's mass character. The opposition in Bulgaria and Romania was more disparate than in East Germany or Czechoslovakia. It was joined and assisted by key elements of communist leadership. Indeed, the popular and scholarly debate over whether the December 1989 Revolution in Romania was a revolution or a palace coup led by disgruntled communists is ongoing.¹⁰² Nonetheless, in Romania as well as in Bulgaria, each country's dissidents, intellectuals, and students, much like elsewhere in Eastern Europe in 1956 and 1968, provided the critical leadership to help guide the large-scale opposition that arose during the fall of 1989.

Where unrest occurred during the 1989 revolutions largely matches previous activity. Analysis of unrest data for Bulgaria indicates that nearly 60% of the *okrugs* (counties) with the greatest unrest in 1989 were in the same category for the 1977-1985 period. The same correlation exists for the 1989 unrest in Romania, with approximately half its *judets* (counties) appearing prominently in both periods.¹⁰³

In summary, while vital to assessing the 1989 Revolutions throughout Eastern Europe, the environment and the incidents that transpired in this critical year are even more important for understanding the unrest that has occurred in the decade since the Cold War ended. Many of the elements present in the unrest environment in 1989 remained during the 1990s, shaping protest issues and patterns to the present

CHAPTER 3

POST-COLD WAR UNREST IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE: BULGARIAN AND ROMANIAN CASE STUDIES

NIE 12-90: Crystal Ball for the 1990s?

The decade following the collapse of Communism is marked more by continuity than change. In that light, it is valuable to compare what the US intelligence community predicted at the outset of the decade with what actually transpired. Such an exercise highlights where the historical record diverged from theory. It also alerts us to potential problems when later attempting to perform the same function for the next decade.

NIE 12-90—*The Future of Eastern Europe*—painted a dim, and potentially strife torn future for the region. The intelligence assessment asserted that lingering economic crises and resurgent ethnic divisions might fuel chronic political instability, interstate tensions, and even a relapse to authoritarianism, notably in the Balkans.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, the near term danger to democratization in East-central Europe was seen as being that the whole process would run out of steam as popular euphoria waned and substantial economic improvement failed to occur. The result, it was assessed, would be a paralyzing political impasse or prolonged “muddling through” as in the Third World. NIE 12-90 forecast the worst case scenario—most likely in Romania and Yugoslavia—as a turn to authoritarianism, not a return to Communism, with growing repression of ethnic minorities and civil strife.¹⁰⁵

Open source assessments from the early 1990s likewise pointed to Southeastern Europe as a potential powder keg ready to explode. In December 1989, Bulgaria was seen by many Western observers as on the verge of civil war, still reeling from the 1985 name changing campaign and the departure of 300,000 Turks earlier that summer.¹⁰⁶ Rising nationalism in Bulgaria—evidenced by a series of rallies and strikes in 1990—gave considerable cause for concern as well.¹⁰⁷ Days of rioting in Romania in March 1990 between ethnic Hungarians and Romanians provided yet another ominous beginning to the new decade.¹⁰⁸

Events during the last decade—particularly in the Former Yugoslavia—have validated much of what NIE 12-90 and others had foretold, even if their most dire predictions have not come true. While Bulgaria and Romania avoided the conflict and strife seen elsewhere in Southeastern Europe, both have endured years of economic trouble, political crises, and social tension. It is thus critical to examine the scale and nature of the unrest that did occur in these nations and the factors and groups behind it.

Such an examination provides some insight into why Bosnia, not Bulgaria, burst into ethnic conflict in 1991 as well as why freely elected governments still reign in both countries.

Unrest in Bulgaria and Romania

Scale and Scope

The end of communism has certainly not eliminated unrest in Eastern Europe. In Bulgaria and Romania alone, over 1600 unrest incidents were identified for the period 1990-1999.¹⁰⁹ This represents more than a threefold increase over any period for which unrest data is available during the Cold War.¹¹⁰ While part of this jump may be due to the greater openness of the post-Cold War regimes in Bulgaria and Romania and better data, the increase reflects marked dissatisfaction in both countries. Analysis of this unrest indicates that much of the protest activity occurred early in the 1990s, with over 600 incidents reported in 1990 alone. In contrast, by mid-decade, Bulgaria and Romania together witnessed fewer than 20 unrest incidents. While this downward trend is holding for Bulgaria, a significant upturn in unrest in Romania that began in 1998 appears to be continuing.¹¹¹

The nature of civil unrest in the decade since the fall of the Berlin Wall has changed in several ways as well. For one, the trend toward a reliance on less violent forms of resistance has increased. During the 1990s, strikes and protest rallies comprised between 50-60% of the identified unrest incidents in Bulgaria and Romania while riots and political violence were used in less than 5% of the known incidents. These percentages stand in stark contrast to both earlier periods of unrest during the Cold War, especially in Bulgaria where riots and political violence comprised nearly 60-70% of the unrest detected.¹¹²

Another change is the duration of unrest itself. Strikes and demonstrations have lasted for weeks and, in some cases, months.¹¹³ During the Cold War, neither the Romanian *Securitate* nor the Bulgarian security service would have permitted such unrest to continue; strikes and demonstrations were quelled quickly. Prior to the 1989 December Revolution in Romania, the longest and most significant protest in that country had been the Jiu Valley miners strike, an action that lasted for only three days.¹¹⁴ Beyond the extended duration of protests, the numbers of participants in incidents has increased as well. These numbers--ranging from less than a dozen to close to 100,000--were generally higher in the first few years following Communism's collapse; but they have continued to exceed those seen throughout the Cold War in Bulgaria or Romania. One reason for the increased participation and yet another difference from unrest prior to 1989 is the widespread coordination and cooperation between dissident elements. Isolating outbreaks of unrest and severing access to outside communications had always been instrumental to the success of Bulgarian and Romanian security officials during the Cold War. The legalization of trade unions and generally free and open communication that has prevailed in both countries since 1989 has thus undermined this counterstrategy and

made possible increased coordination among opposition elements. Finally, with the gradual disappearance of state-run industries and move toward a market driven economy, one of the primary means of resistance available to the populace during the Cold War--passive resistance—has become much less viable.¹¹⁵

What Caused This Unrest?

The factors prompting unrest have remained largely unchanged in the years since the destruction of the Iron Curtain. Economic issues continue as the predominant force with approximately 46% of the unrest in both countries during the 1990s tied to wages, prices and work conditions, including job security.¹¹⁶ The slow transition to market economies with its concomitant restructuring and downsizing has served to reinforce the economic discontent felt by many during the Cold War.

Ethnic strife and virulent nationalism likewise did not disappear with the Iron Curtain. Ethnic unrest in Bulgaria and Romania has continued to center around familiar issues--language, education, and governance. From 1990-1999, over 15% of the incidents for each country were tied to ethnic issues.¹¹⁷ In Bulgaria, much of this unrest occurred during the volatile transition years of 1990-1991, when the ethnic Turkish political party—the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF)—sought registration and insisted that Turkish was incorporated into the educational curriculum. In Romania, a similar pattern was evident, with the most significant outbreak of ethnic unrest occurring in March 1990 in Tirgu Mures.¹¹⁸ In the years since, ethnic incidents have generally diminished, aided by improving relations between the Romanian and Hungarian governments. Occasional protest and unrest has invariably been tied to perceived discriminatory education or language measures and provocative actions by Romanian nationalists and ethnic Hungarians.¹¹⁹

Political demands have played a more prominent role in the decade since the fall of the Berlin Wall than they did during the Cold War as both countries have moved from Communism to more democratic rule. Not surprisingly, political issues—removal of former communists, demands for freedom of speech, imposing restrictions on security forces, and a full accounting of previous crimes—were voiced primarily earlier in the decade. With the exception of the 1997 demonstrations in Bulgaria, politics appear to have taken a backseat to the more pressing issues of economic survival.¹²⁰ At the same time, the democratic process itself—with elections and campaigns—has contributed to unrest in the 1990s. Several of the most significant periods of unrest in Bulgaria and Romania have surrounded presidential and parliamentary elections.¹²¹ Political parties from across the political spectrum have sought to exploit the social discontent and democratic process to unseat the majority and gain power.

The decade since the death of the Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu and the removal of Bulgaria's Todor Zhivkov—the country's last communist ruler—has also witnessed a drop in unrest linked to the pursuit of one's religion. This decrease is tied in part to a

reduction in government interference in religious matters. Recent human rights reporting, however, indicates that harassment of “illegal” religious sects continues.¹²²

Other factors, some reminiscent of issues during the Cold War, have spurred occasional outbursts of protest in the 1990s. Efforts to return land and property expropriated as part of the 1950s collectivization campaign, for example, led to a series of protest actions in Bulgaria during 1992 and 1993.¹²³ And while overt anti-Soviet behavior has largely disappeared since the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact disbanded, Romanian protests have been ignited by the territorial legacy of the Second World War and the treatment afforded ethnic minorities in Moldavia.¹²⁴ Finally, ecological issues have carried over from the Cold War, spurring a variety of protest actions designed to raise public consciousness and alter government policies.¹²⁵

Where has it occurred and who was involved?

Significant carryover in the location of unrest in Bulgaria and Romania has continued since the end of the Cold War. During the 1990s, unrest occurred largely where it had occurred before—in the cities, industrial centers, and ethnic enclaves. Both nations’ capitals—Sofia and Bucharest—experienced the largest number of protests. In Bulgaria, the next four highest areas of unrest—Kurdzhali, Ruse, Plovdiv, and Blagoevgrad—reflect a mix of industrial and minority areas. The same is true in Romania, where Timis, Cluj, Hunedoara, and Brasov rounded out the top five areas of unrest during the 1990s. When examined in historical perspective, the extent of this carryover becomes even clearer. All of the top five areas of unrest during the 1990s in Romania were also identified among the top five in either the 1989 Revolution or the late Cold War (1977-85). While not quite as strong, the correlation in Bulgaria over time is likewise significant, with three of the top five unrest areas the same during these time periods.¹²⁶ The historical carryover in the areas experiencing the least unrest is equally significant for Bulgaria and Romania.¹²⁷

Unrest “hotspots” go beyond the county level to even specific enterprises. The Brasov truck factory, the Bucharest railyards, and the Jiu Valley mines are three prominent examples of where time has not altered the role or location of industrial unrest.¹²⁸ This historical relationship and the ability to identify localized “hotspots” has weakened some in recent years due to the efforts of legalized trade unions to coordinate protest actions on a national scale in Bulgaria and Romania. Where before a protest action would originate and remain localized, the more open political environment in post Cold War Bulgaria and Romania has helped ensure previously localized conflicts take on a national character.

The decade since 1989 has witnessed only minor change among those involved in opposition activity. Workers from the mining, transportation, and industrial sectors remain the most prominent elements challenging the Bulgarian and Romanian governments.¹²⁹ University students also have retained a significant role in unrest in Bulgaria and in Romania, whether establishing “Cities of Truth,” such as in Bulgaria

during 1990, or conducting nationwide strikes in Romania. Lastly, Turkish and Hungarian minorities in these two countries remain a lightning rod for protest. While ethnic concerns have diminished significantly since the early 1990s, language, education, and autonomy issues have not lost their ability to quickly generate protest and polarize groups, particularly in Romania. The same is true of the Roma or gypsies. The Cold War's demise has not brought an end to attacks on this group or an increase in their political consciousness.¹³⁰

At the same time, the opposition in Bulgaria and Romania is not monolithic. One change evident during the 1990s has been the emergence of new trade unions among white-collar workers--teachers, medical workers, and other professionals. Former members of the communist establishment have also increasingly used protest actions to advance their interests.¹³¹ Another change is the role played by industrial trade unions. Representing the sectors most severely hurt by the closure of state owned industries and the transition to a market economy, these workers have fought hard against plant closures, lay-offs, and price rises throughout the 1990s, evolving from a voice attacking the status quo to one protecting it. Dissidents and intellectuals have likewise witnessed changes in their participation and their role in unrest since the 1989 revolutions. While pushing hard for political change early in the decade, these groups largely disappeared as an identifiable opposition group by 1996.¹³² This absence is probably explained in part by less visible participation in established political parties, emigration to the West, and their own success in institutionalizing democratic processes.

The Post Cold War Unrest Environment

Knowing the scale and nature of the unrest, where and why it has occurred, and who has been behind it aid in understanding what has transpired in Bulgaria and Romania since the Cold War's end. Yet accurately assessing the potential for future instability in these countries requires moving beyond incident tabulations to consider the overall unrest environment in each country, identifying those factors that have been most important in inhibiting as well as facilitating unrest during the last decade.

Inhibiting Factors

Like the unrest itself, many of the factors that inhibited anti-regime activity in Bulgaria and in Romania during the Cold War have not changed. The divided nature of the opposition in both countries is foremost among these. The ethnic and political differences that undermined efforts to alter or remove communist regimes in each country for 40 years have not disappeared; nor have the limitations wrought by such internal discord on the ability of opposition elements to successfully force social change.¹³³ The strong desire to join NATO and the EU has also served to dampen unrest in both countries. Strict NATO and EU admission requirements have forced Bulgaria and Romania to improve their human rights records and minimize conflict with neighboring Turkey and Hungary over minority issues, restrictions that mirror in some ways those

imposed by “fraternal” relations in the former Warsaw Pact.¹³⁴ The failure of the 1991 Moscow coup is yet another factor that has worked against unrest in the region. The coup’s failure has served as a significant deterrent to like-minded elements in Bulgaria and Romania and removed potential support for hard-liners and former communists in these countries. Finally, the large-scale emigration of the young, educated, and minorities in the early 1990s in Bulgaria and Romania served much the same function as it did during the communist hey days, acting as a safety valve by dispatching those elements most likely to participate in or lead protest actions.¹³⁵

Other factors, not present during the Cold War, have further inhibited unrest. Hopes and expectations that life would be better after communism created a “grace period” for democracy that has served to postpone widespread protests and violence. The lack of a captivating ideology to replace communism has been an additional factor. During the early 1990s much of the political unrest in Bulgaria and Romania was directed against communism and its historical legacy. Yet the failure of an ideology to emerge capable of capitalizing on the shortcomings of capitalism and democracy has ensured that protests have remained isolated and less threatening. Nationalist stirrings and the revival of fascist movements like the Iron Guard in Romania suggest that this ideological void may be filled in the future.

Perhaps the most important force in preventing a revolution or widespread ethnic conflict in Bulgaria and Romania during the last ten years has ironically been the ability of populace to express its dissatisfaction in legally sanctioned ways. In contrast to the Cold War, individuals and groups in both countries have multiple avenues--free press and speech, political parties, elections--to voice their discontent and work for change.

Lastly, while control mechanisms, such as the Ministry of Interior and informers, have historically been crucial in preventing and limiting unrest in Eastern Europe, new, more subtle methods have been developed and used by the Bulgarian and Romanian governments since the Cold War’s end. Management changes, the imposition of fines, and other sanctions, to include limiting the availability of critical resources like paper, have been effectively used to limit and intimidate the free press.¹³⁶

Facilitating and Double-Edge Factors

In much the same manner, multiple, interrelated factors have been instrumental in creating an environment conducive to unrest in the aftermath of Communism’s collapse. The severe economic problems afflicting Bulgaria and Romania are certainly the most important factors facilitating unrest in each country. As true during the Cold War as it is today, bread and butter issues are integrally tied to the overwhelming majority of protest actions in both nations, whether political or ethnic in nature. Reductions in the size, roles, and powers possessed by the Ministry of Interior and the military in Bulgaria and Romania have been almost equally significant in facilitating unrest, especially during 1990 and 1991 when over half the unrest noted in the decade occurred. Ineffective and frequently changing governments have been other factors contributing to a sense of drift

and prompting unrest in each country. The same can be said of fear and unfulfilled expectations. Throughout much of Eastern Europe, but particularly in the Balkans, a fear of the unknown and the future, fueled by unfulfilled expectations concerning the West and democracy, has contributed to a pervasive unease and conflict.

The effect of certain factors on unrest is more difficult to assess since their influence can change depending upon their timing or the presence or absence of other variables. Western political and financial policies represent one such factor. During the 1990s western financial assistance was used to soften the economic hardships produced by the transition to a market economy. Yet the strict fiscal and monetary requirements imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or EU often drive the unpopular policies that spark civil unrest.

Unrest and conflict in the nation itself as well as elsewhere in the Eastern Europe is another dual-edge factor. For instance, ethnic conflict in Bosnia and Kosovo largely dampened ethnic unrest in Bulgaria and Romania, serving as a reminder of what could happen in these countries. But the effect might have been very different if Bosnia had exploded in 1990, when ethnic unrest peaked in Bulgaria. Success or failure in the use of unrest to attain goals or change policies or governments can likewise encourage or conversely discourage such activity.

The democratic, electoral process is a third factor. While the democratic process provides a legitimate venue for opposition and discontent, it also encourages and facilitates actions that might be exploited or used to topple a government. The scale of unrest during the 1990s—at least a threefold increase over similar periods in the Cold War—attests to the potential dual nature of the democratic process.

Lastly, the influence exercised by an individual leader in prompting or inhibiting unrest can be significant. The efforts of Bulgaria's ethnic Turkish Party leader—Ahmed Dogan—to advance Turkish minority rights while preserving ethnic peace stands in sharp contrast to those of others in Southeastern Europe, like Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic. Dogan's absence or a different approach on his part might have made Bulgaria, not Bosnia, a focal point for ethnic cleansing in the early 1990s.¹³⁷

In summary, the unrest environment prevailing in Bulgaria and Romania since the Cold War's end has mirrored in many ways the decade that preceded it. Economic problems certainly didn't disappear along with Communism. Despite some modest improvement in the mid-1990s—due in part western funds misused to buoy the economy—the economic plight of the majority of Bulgarians and Romanians has gotten worse, not better in the years since 1989.¹³⁸ Benefits such as a free press and the right to travel, noted one source recently, “mean little when the stomach is hungry.”¹³⁹ Moreover, this dissatisfaction has been manifested increasingly in protest actions, particularly in Romania. A record of ethnic discord remains as well. But the picture here is brighter. Bulgarian and ethnic Turkish leaders demonstrated the political will during the 1990s to resolve their internal disputes through compromise and accommodation thereby avoiding the ethnic confrontation seen elsewhere in Southeastern Europe since the end of the Cold

War.¹⁴⁰ Similar, albeit less direct, efforts have contributed to ethnic peace in Romania. Nonetheless, periodic unrest over ethnic education, language, and autonomy reinforce the fragility of this ethnic peace. The bottom-line is that Bulgaria and Romania confront significant challenges in managing the political and economic transitions that remain on the path to democracy and market capitalism. The progress made thus far has been limited and ephemeral in nature, reflecting the fact that the freedoms won in 1989 don't always aid transition but sometimes are used to interrupt progress and strengthen the status quo.¹⁴¹

And what does this tell us about the future? How are the challenges we face today in identifying instability different or similar to those faced during the Cold War and even in the last decade? More importantly, what measures can be adopted to meet these new challenges and improve our ability to anticipate and identify potential instability in Eastern Europe? Chapter Four attempts to address these questions, proposing an unrest model to assist in evaluating and forecasting future unrest.

CHAPTER 4

ASSESSING THE UNREST ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE: FORECASTING THE NEXT EXPLOSION

Familiar Challenges

How does one know whether a people will revolt? To answer this question, one must address a series of related questions. First, what makes people take action to oppose their governments? What are the issues and who is involved? Second, what dissuades them from taking action? Lastly, what other factors affect their decisions as well as the size and scope of the opposition activity? Answering these questions with any certainty is made inherently difficult by the fact that humans are the primary actors in this drama, actors who are influenced by a multitude of variables and who don't always act rationally.

My objective in addressing these questions is not to predict the future but to highlight those factors that require greater consideration, including formal incorporation into a revised indications and warning (I & W) list. The historical insights gained from this study and the altered post Cold War environment in Southeastern Europe itself suggest that a list of refined warning indicators be developed. This should provide more timely and detailed warning to US policymakers as to if and when political and social unrest in Bulgaria and Romania will be transformed into an uprising or a revolution, ultimately enhancing the West's ability to prevent or better respond to such potential crises.

Modeling Unrest and the Future

Political scientists, intelligence analysts, and other scholars use a variety of mathematical and social science tools to attempt to understand and forecast future developments. Two widely employed tools within the intelligence community are "Alternative Futures" and "Factions and Policon." Alternative Futures, as its name suggests, is used to estimate and assess potential outcomes in the days, months, or years ahead. This model recognizes the challenges posed by estimating outcomes based on limited and often imprecise data and thus seeks to overcome them by broadly framing the spectrum of possible scenarios and then assessing which are the more likely general outcomes.

The 1988 National Intelligence Estimate for Eastern Europe and the 1991 estimate for the Soviet Union illustrate this methodological approach. Examining the future in May 1988, NIE 11/12-9-88 postulated three alternative futures for Eastern Europe over the next five years: Popular Upheaval, Sweeping Reform, and Conservative Backlash. Similarly, NIE 11-18-91—*Implications of Alternative Soviet Futures*—explored four different scenarios, ranging from “Chronic Crisis” to “Fragmentation” and evaluated the implications of each scenario on a series of issues for the West. The value of this approach and these estimates is that they—as pointed out by former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft—“narrow the range of uncertainty within which a decision must be made” and assist in spotting, tracking, and interpreting trends and patterns.¹⁴² Such insight allows for the initiation of policy responses that have a long lead-time.

Unlike “Alternative Futures,” “Factions and Policon” is generally focused on more immediate situations. This methodology attempts to identify the choices key players will make in a particular environment and in turn the likely outcome. The CIA’s Intelligence Directorate and the National Intelligence Council’s Analytic Group have used “Factions and Policon” for this purpose since 1982. The approach is built on social choice theory and it depicts political relationships mathematically.¹⁴³ When compared with traditional analyses, Policon-based analyses scored equally well but offered greater detail and less vagueness. Like all methodologies, “Factions and Policon” has its shortcomings. For one, Policon and Factions is dependent on the quality of information used. Moreover, this methodology cannot forecast when and how fast events will unfold.¹⁴⁴ Finally, it does not allow for a systematic integration of historical unrest data or allow for a random variable.

Cold War Instability Model

Another approach developed for but not formally used in forecasting unrest in Eastern Europe emphasized the presence or absence of key variables in a country’s “unrest environment.”¹⁴⁵ Much as in weather forecasting, the unrest environment model monitored conditions that historically had led to social or political upheaval. This Cold War model assessed 27 factors in the environment, organizing them into six broad categories: Economic, International Influences, Political, Societal, Psychological, and Volatility (Table 1). These factors were further refined. Seven factors were identified that had played the most important roles in the past in determining whether popular dissatisfaction became a formidable threat to the communist authorities or was easily contained. The “critical seven” included the performance of the individual East European economy, the status of the Soviet and satellite party leadership, and the reliability of the host regime’s security forces. Rounding out this group were the type and strength of nationalism present in a country, access to or control over the media or communications facilities, and presence or absence of an issue capable of inciting the majority of the populace.¹⁴⁶

TABLE 1

Environmental Factors in Cold War Unrest Model

| <u>Category</u> | <u>Factor</u> | <u>Status or Condition of Factor</u> | <u>Impact on Unrest</u> | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| | | | <u>Favorable</u> | <u>Unfavorable</u> | <u>Indeterminate</u> |
| Economic | - *Status of Economy: (Performance) - Stage of Economy: - Type of Economic System: | Poor/Fair/Good Preindustrial/Industrial/Advanced Command/Mixed | | | |
| International Influences | - Proximity to USSR - Soviet Troops in Country - Relations with USSR - *Status of Soviet Leadership - Soviet Policies Toward Eastern Europe - Proximity to & Contact with the West - Policies of the West - Unrest in Other East European Countries (Spillover Effect) | Close/Distant Yes/No Poor/Fair/Good Strife/Succession Issue Close/Distant/Limited/Moderate/ Extensive | | | |
| Political | - *Status of Party Leadership - Policies of the Regime - Manner of Policy Implementation - *Reliability of Security Forces - Status of Opposition Elements - Nature of Opposition - Extent of Opposition | Strife-Torn/Unified/Discord/Controlled United/Divided Intellectual Ferment Labor Unrest Active Resistance Passive Resistance Partisan Activity Widespread/Moderate/Isolated | | | |
| Societal | - Ethnic/Class Composition - Education Level - Percentage of population with vested interest in communist system | | | | |
| Psychological | - Societal Expectations - *Nationalism - Historical Influences - Outcome of Previous Disturbances | Rising/Falling/Constant Strong/Weak/Conflicting Tradition of Militancy/Pacifism | | | |
| Volatility | - *Incident capable of inciting majority of populace - *Access to/control of media/communications facilities | | | | |

*Indicates "critical 7" factor

To forecast or at very least to serve as a rudimentary indications and warning tool, this model constructed unrest ratios based on the status and influence each factor had on unrest in sixteen major instances of unrest in Eastern Europe between 1953 and 1981 (see Table 2). Factors were assessed as either having a favorable, unfavorable, or indeterminate influence on unrest in a particular country and crisis. Favorable and unfavorable outcomes were ascribed a simple numerical value of one, with the ratio representing the number of favorable divided by unfavorable factors. A second ratio comprised solely of the “critical seven” was similarly constructed and used.

TABLE 2
Unrest Ratios for Key Crises in Eastern Europe, 1953-1989

| <u>Event & Year(s)</u> | <u>Overall Ratio</u> | <u>Critical 7</u> | <u>Status of Environment</u> |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Bulgaria, 1989</i> | 3.33 - 1 | 2.5 - 1 | Very Favorable |
| <i>East Germany 1989</i> | 4.2 - 1 | 6 - 1 | Very Favorable |
| <i>Romania 1989</i> | 3.16 | 2 - 1 | Very Favorable |
| <i>Poland, 1980-81</i> | 8 - 1 | 6 - 1 | Very Favorable |
| <i>Romania, 1980-81</i> | 1.16 - 1 | 2 - 5 | Less Favorable |
| <i>Romania Jiu Valley Strikes, 1977</i> | .81 - 1 | 1 - 6 | Less Favorable |
| <i>Charter 77, January 1977</i> | 1.18 - 1 | 1 - 4 | Less Favorable |
| <i>1976 Riots in Poland</i> | 2.57 - 1 | 1 - 1 | Less Favorable |
| <i>1970 Polish Baltic Coast Riots</i> | 1.4 - 1 | 4 - 3 | Less Favorable |
| <i>Czechoslovak Prague Spring</i> | 3.83 - 1 | 5 - 2 | Very Favorable |
| <i>1968 Polish Student Riots</i> | 1.77 - 1 | 3 - 2 | Less Favorable |
| <i>1961 Berlin Crisis</i> | .92 - 1 | 2 - 5 | Less Favorable |
| <i>1956 Hungarian Revolution</i> | 4.6 - 1 | 7 - 0 | Very Favorable |
| <i>East Germany, 1956</i> | 1.77 - 1 | 1 - 1 | Less Favorable |
| <i>Romania, 1956</i> | .66 - 1 | 1 - 4 | Less Favorable |
| <i>Polish October, 1956</i> | 4.2 - 1 | 6 - 0 | Very Favorable |
| <i>Poznan Riots (Poland), June 1956</i> | 2.1 - 1 | 5 - 2 | Favorable |
| <i>1953 East German Uprising</i> | 3.66 - 1 | 7 - 0 | Very Favorable |
| <i>1953 Czechoslovak Riots</i> | 1.88 - 1 | 3 - 2 | Less Favorable |

Very Favorable: Overall “unrest ratio” of 3 or more and “critical 7” ratio of 2-1 or greater. Historically associated with a major eruption of unrest. Favorable: Overall “unrest ratio” of 2 - 3 and a “critical 7” ratio of 1.5 to 1.99. Less Favorable: Overall “unrest ration” of less than 2 and a “critical 7” ratio of less than 1.5. Unrest in this environment was usually isolated and contained.

In running this model, an overall unrest ratio of three or more, in conjunction with a “critical seven” ratio of two or higher was a reliable predictor of a major political and

social eruption (Table 2). The East German and Hungarian Uprisings and the Polish “October” in the 1950s, the “Prague Spring” in 1968, and the 1981 Solidarity Crisis in Poland all met or exceeded these criteria. The same was true when the model was used to assess the 1989 upheaval in Bulgaria, East Germany, and Romania. Serious but less threatening social and political unrest was associated with an overall unrest ratio of two to three and a “critical seven” reading of 1.5 to 1.99. The June 1956 *Poznan* disturbances fell within these parameters. The remaining category—ratios below 2 and 1.5 respectively—encompassed those instances where unrest and dissatisfaction were present in a particular East European country but did not develop into a significant challenge to the regime. This was by far the largest group and included disturbances that spanned the entire post-World War II period.

Would such a model be of value in assessing unrest in Bulgaria and Romania in the post Cold War world as well? Yes, most likely. Revised and updated to reflect communism’s demise and the analysis of a decade of unrest in both countries, such an unrest environment model would at the very least sensitize analysts to key issues and variables, thereby aiding in the formulation of a more effective and accurate list of warning indicators.

A Post-Cold War Model

The end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union have altered a number of the factors upon which the unrest environment model had been constructed. Foremost among these is the diminished role Russia plays in the region. While still exerting considerable economic, political, and cultural influence, Moscow’s dictates and policies no longer have the direct and immediate impact that they did during the Cold War. The departure of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe is by far the clearest and most significant manifestation of this decreased influence. (See Table 3 for a comparison of the models)

Continuity rather than change, however, is the watchword when it comes to the unrest environment in Southeastern Europe. Indeed, the analysis completed on unrest in Bulgaria and Romania in the 1990s revealed more similarity than difference from the Cold War environment that preceded it. Thus many of the factors present in the previous model require only minor revisions reflecting the departure of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party. Other revisions are needed to capture important variables, such as the stage of economic reform or transition. In post Cold War Bulgaria and Romania, this variable, not whether a country’s economy is in a pre-industrial or an industrial stage, provides valuable insight into the likelihood and scale of unrest. An even more significant revision involves incorporating the historical unrest data compiled under the “extent of opposition.” The database of unrest incidents permits the analyst to account for the importance of where unrest has occurred as well as the participants.

TABLE 3

Comparison of Cold War and Post-Cold War models**Cold War Factors**

- Economic
- *Performance of Economy
 - Stage of economy
 - Type of economic system
- International Influences
- Proximity to USSR
 - Presence of Soviet troops
 - Relations with USSR
 - *Status of Soviet Leadership
 - Soviet Policies Toward Eastern Europe
 - Proximity & Contact with the West
 - Policies of West
 - Unrest in Other East European countries
- Political
- *Status of Party leadership
 - Policies of regime
 - Manner of policy implementation
 - *Reliability of security forces
 - Status of Opposition Elements
 - Nature of Opposition Activity
 - Extent of Opposition
- Societal
- Ethnic/class composition
 - Education level
 - % with vested interest in system
- Psychological
- Societal expectations
 - *Nationalism
 - Historical Influences
 - Outcome of previous unrest
- Volatility
- *Incident or Issue capable of inciting majority of populace
 - *Access to or control of public media media/communications

Post-Cold War Factors

- Economic
- *Performance of economy
 - **Stage of Economic Transition**
- International Influences
- **Trade/ties with Russia**
 - **Conflict and Cooperation in Region**
 - Relations with Russia
 - Status Russian leadership
 - Russian policies toward Eastern Europe
 - Interaction with the West
 - Policies of West
 - Unrest in Other East European countries
 - ***Role of IMF, World Bank, etc.**
- Political
- *Government Stability
 - Government policies
 - Manner of policy implementation
 - *Reliability of security forces
 - Status of political parties
 - Type of unrest
 - ***Extent & coordination of opposition**
 - **Elections**
- Societal
- Ethnic/class composition
 - **Status of Institutions**
 - Percentage middle class
- Psychological
- Societal expectations
 - *Nationalism
 - Historical influences
 - Outcome of past unrest
- Volatility
- *Incident or issue capable of inciting majority of populace
 - Access to or control of media/communications

*Indicates "critical 7" factor. **Boldface indicates new or significantly modified factor**

Yet several factors should be added. Conflict and cooperation in the region is one such factor. "Fraternal solidarity" within the Warsaw Pact and the possibility for super

power confrontation minimized the potential for armed conflict in Southeastern Europe during the Cold War. The four Balkan wars in the last decade highlight the need to incorporate the increased possibility of armed conflict into the model. Similarly, the effect that political and economic cooperation or the lack thereof has on the countries of Southeastern Europe—as evidenced in the Balkan Stability Pact—requires systematic consideration. Another factor is the critical role and influence exerted by international organizations like the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and European Union. Finally, elections, a mere formality during the Cold War, are now central to assessing the unrest environment throughout Eastern Europe.

The “critical seven,” not surprisingly, reflect this same mix of continuity and change. Neither the value nor importance of a country’s economic performance in determining the potential for unrest has diminished with the passage of time. Conversely, the “status of Soviet leadership” is no longer as critical and should be deleted from the “critical seven.” The same is true of “access to media.” The generally unrestricted media access available in Bulgaria and Romania in the post-Cold War environment have reduced the predictive value of this factor. Other recommended changes involve increasing the importance attributed to Western economic and political organizations—like the IMF and EU—and the extent of cooperation among opposition elements. These factors, given the developments in Southeastern Europe during the last decade, should be incorporated into the “critical seven.”

Considered in its entirety, the unrest environment model is neither simple nor static. The unrest environment for any particular situation is formed by the dynamic interaction of different factors and participants, and thus requires constant monitoring to ensure the appropriate factors and values are used.

Indicators and Warning Signs for the Next Explosion in Southeastern Europe

How does this discussion assist us in being prepared to better recognize pending upheaval in Southeastern Europe? If nothing else, it has illuminated key variables that facilitated or hindered such events in the past. Revised in light of the new realities confronted in Southeastern Europe and in Bulgaria and Romania, in particular, this model suggests a number of factors and issues that can be used to enhance current warning indicators for these countries. These warning indicators would be monitored at the strategic/theater and country/tactical levels and would incorporate the lessons learned from examining five decades of unrest in Bulgaria and Romania.

Three key warning indicators require monitoring at the strategic/theater level. The actions and attitudes emanating from Moscow is one such indicator. Any indication that nationalist and/or authoritarian sentiment was increasing in Russia could have profound implications for Southeastern Europe and the resurgence of hard-line elements in Bulgarian and Romania. The actions of the West, especially its financial sector, likewise have had and will continue exercise enormous influence over the region. Planned or even rumored actions to raise interest rates, forestall loan guarantees, or fulfill

previous economic commitments may generate far-reaching economic and political fallout and spur unrest. Conflict or significant unrest elsewhere in the region is the third indicator at the theater/strategic level that requires added attention in the post-Cold War unrest environment. The potential for further conflict in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with the accompanying spillover of violence, refugees, and economic disruption, poses a real and continuing threat to the fragile stability in Bulgaria and Romania.

Tactical warning indicators for Bulgaria and Romania likewise require close attention. Comprised of information on each country drawn from six areas—economic and political developments, unrest activity, public expectations, and the actions of the media and the regime's control mechanisms—these tactical indicators would probably provide the first warning that a major outbreak of unrest is in the offing.

In the economic realm, a closer and more focused examination is needed of how economic restructuring and reform will affect key industries and unions. This level of detail goes beyond what had previously sufficed during the Cold War. Proposed layoffs or a curtailment of benefits in some sectors may have little or no effect while contraction in another could spark nationwide unrest and political turmoil. True during the Cold War and continuing in the years since, it has been the miners, industrial workers and students that are the groups most likely to challenge the regime and actively voice their dissatisfaction.

Tracking developments in the country's political leadership remains critical in the wake of the Cold War as well. This pertains to the composition of the parties and coalitions, particularly ethnic parties like Bulgaria's Turkish MRF and Romania's Hungarian UDMR. But the need to monitor actions within Parliament, including walkouts and no confidence votes, is new. These actions may serve as another warning that popular dissatisfaction is spreading and significant political change may follow. Elections and the periods preceding and following them likewise now carry added significance. Bulgaria and Romania each experienced their most serious and widespread unrest since the collapse of Communism during these periods in 1990 and 1991.

Monitoring public expectations and sentiments is another area that has taken on greater importance in the wake of Communism's collapse. High expectations established during the 1989 revolutions have yet to be realized in either Bulgaria or Romania. The perception that each country's sacrifices to join NATO or be admitted to the EU have been in vain could ignite a decade of dissatisfaction driven by economic deprivation. Thus virtually any action or even rumor of EU or NATO action needs to be carefully assessed as to its probable influence on unrest in Bulgaria and Romania.

What is said in the media in these countries also matters in a way that it never did before. No longer merely parroting the Communist Party line, the media now presents a valuable window through which to examine issues and attitudes of importance to large segments of the population. How the Bulgarian and Romanian media treat the West and the past are two indicators that bear close observation. Casting the West as the scapegoat

for the nation's problems or rehabilitating officials or policies from the past might be the early indications that support for a more authoritarian government and political change was forthcoming.

Perhaps the clearest and most significant tactical level indicators would involve unrest activity itself. Any marked increase in the number of unrest incidents or in the percentage of violent incidents would have particular importance. The same is true of an increase in the number of politically or ideologically motivated incidents or signs that traditionally apolitical groups were exhibiting greater political orientation. Increased, open alignment by labor unions with political parties would be another indicator to closely monitor. Greater cooperation among opposition elements—both within and between existing organizations—would be even more important. A related indicator would be the number of national strikes and whether that figure had increased.

Changes in role, size, subordination, or authority of the military and security services in Bulgaria and Romania deserve commensurate attention. Such changes might be another indicator of the scale and seriousness of the unrest confronted in that country or an omen that a return to a more authoritarian regime was on its way. The same would be true of a revision to the laws governing the media and public assembly or a decrease in the size or the private/independent media in Bulgaria and Romania.

New Challenges and Resources

The collapse of Communism has generated its own set of new challenges for those monitoring and assessing unrest in Bulgaria and Romania and the other areas of Eastern Europe. Distinguishing the important "sounds" from the "background noise" in the unrest environment has become much more difficult. Dissent and opposition, as previously noted, are now legal and represent, in many ways, the norm. During the Cold War virtually any open manifestation of dissatisfaction was significant and the exception, not the rule. "Samizdat" no longer exists; instead there is a large and, for the most part, free press and media that continually airs "appeals," "protests," and "demands."

The scope and complexity of the problem has increased as well. There are multiple opposition agendas and personalities to follow in the post Cold War world. Moreover, considerable diversity and discord exists within these groups and organizations. The number of labor organizations in Bulgaria and Romania as well as the divisions within them is a case in point. In 1999, for example, there were 18 nationwide trade union confederations and many other smaller independent trade unions active in Romania.¹⁴⁷ Throughout the 1990s, a trade union would declare a "national" strike only to have local branches either disregard the appeal or use the action for their own unrelated purpose. A similar challenge exists in the political arena. Unlike the Cold War where there was only one party to monitor, numerous parties and agendas require study and assessment.

Beyond the scope and complexity of opposition activity is the increased pace at which it develops and spreads. Heretofore, limited access to communication means and effective Cold War security forces had served to largely isolate unrest and slow its development. But the ability of unions and political organizations to openly plan and coordinate their protests makes it harder to single in on "hot spots" and can turn a "local" issue into a "national" cause within hours, not days. In summary, in the post Cold War world, it is harder to identify as quickly what the key issues are, which groups are most important, and where the unrest may erupt and spread to.

The decreased attention devoted to the region is another hurdle. Bulgaria, Romania, and the other East European satellites were the focus of a significant intelligence effort during the height of the Cold War that closely monitored developments in each nation. This effort was justified on the grounds that the consolidation of Soviet control over the satellite states gave the USSR an advanced position from which to launch an assault on Western Europe as well as a large buffer zone to protect them from Western retaliation. Moreover, the satellites were seen as providing critical manpower and material resources that could be used in the military and economic realm. The Soviet Union's demise destroyed this rationale. Thus while conflict in the Former Yugoslavia has received the West's attention in the decade since the Berlin Wall fell, the same cannot be said of developments in Bulgaria and Romania. Limited intelligence resources and higher policy priorities have focused US attention elsewhere.

These new challenges have been partially offset by Western access to previously unavailable sources and information. Survey data is one such resource. Polls provide a direct and valuable means to identify popular attitudes and gauge dissatisfaction. Similar insights during the Cold War had to be gleaned from interviews with East Bloc escapees, refugees, and diplomatic reporting. Often this reporting was based on smaller and less representative samples. Unrestricted travel and greater direct access to the people of Bulgaria and Romania likewise permit more and better means to measure the pulse of the populace.

The security files of the former communist regimes are another resource that is slowly becoming available. Unfortunately, unlike the former East Germany where the state security police (*Stasi*) records have been open to public research for years, *Securitate* and the Bulgarian Department of State Security files are only now becoming available and even then on a more restricted basis. Nevertheless, such source material should provide greater detail and new insight into opposition activity during the Cold War as well as on the regime's efforts to control it. Finally, government to government cooperation has increased dramatically in the years since the end of the Cold War. Frank and open discussions between the United States and these governments have improved our understanding of the problems they confront. In addition, Bulgarian and Romanian efforts to join NATO and the EU have required that both nations provide heretofore tightly controlled information on everything from the status of their economies to the weapons and size of their militaries.

On the balance, the new analytical challenges posed by the post Cold War environment in Southeastern Europe can be overcome. Indeed, the West has access to greater and more detailed information on the region than ever before. Analytical success, however, goes beyond the sheer volume of information available to how that data is used and how closely and continually events are monitored. This will be even more true in the future.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, CAVEATS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Lessons from the Past

The unrest that has occurred in Bulgaria and Romania since the fall of the Berlin Wall strongly suggests that history does matter and that it can be an important tool for understanding the present and assessing the future. Despite the monumental changes that have accompanied Communism's demise, civil unrest in Bulgaria and Romania during the 1990s has involved largely the same groups, issues, and geographic areas as it did during the Cold War. At the same time, changes have come in the scale, nature, and duration of unrest, as the number of unrest incidents has increased threefold and protest actions have lasted longer and relied less on violence.

Examining unrest during the Cold War, in the 1989 Revolutions, and in the years since has also revealed that the unrest environment in Bulgaria and Romania is becoming more complex and difficult to assess. Improved communication and coordination among opposition elements has reduced the warning time for protest actions while ensuring that unrest spreads much more quickly than during the Cold War. While these changes have been partially offset by improved information access, other, higher intelligence and policy priorities in the post-Cold War world have limited the attention devoted to Bulgaria and Romania. These developments have increased the likelihood that the West may be caught off guard by the sudden eruption of unrest in either country.

This review of unrest during and following the Cold War has likewise driven home the impressive capacity of these societies to tolerate unrest and avoid implosion. Given all that has happened, it is significant that neither Bulgaria nor Romania followed in Bosnia's footsteps. Both countries have continued to "muddle through" their economic, political, and ethnic problems. Yet the absence of cataclysmic failure in the last decade should not blind us to the real danger of meltdown in either country. History as well as current events suggest that the social peace is fragile and the populace's patience is nearly exhausted. Recalling 1989, one Bulgarian recently wrote: "We fell for the seductive talk about democracy and openness. Now 10 years later, I wish we hadn't."¹⁴⁸

Limitations and Caveats

This study and its conclusions are dependent on the data available and used. Time and travel constraints and a heavy reliance on English language materials have limited the data set considered. Moreover, reporting has sometimes been inconsistent,

providing only snap shots of events. For example, details on nationwide strikes and protests—including where such actions did and did not take place—have not always been available. Thus not every incident of unrest in Bulgaria and Romania for the past ten years has been identified; but opposition activity in these two nations has probably, if anything, been understated, not exaggerated.

Beyond gaps in the information gathered, the data collected contains some biases. Reporting on events in larger, urban areas has historically been more extensive and detailed than in the countryside and in smaller villages. This bias has been addressed in part by engaging in multiple looks at the areas of unrest in Bulgaria and Romania over an extended time period and by drawing on available resources in Western and Eastern archives. Despite these limitations, I am confident that a sufficient sample exists to make these historical comparisons and draw valid conclusions.

Predicting if or when unrest will erupt is likewise difficult. Attempting to identify and assess a multitude of dynamic, often interrelated variables that determine whether individuals or groups will challenge government authorities and achieve their objectives has not gotten easier despite advances in analytical and computational methods. Human behavior, because it is often irrational, does not model well. Consequently predictions are inherently imprecise; nonetheless, this assessment contributes to a fuller and more accurate understanding of the dynamics of Cold War and post-Cold War unrest in Southeastern Europe. An additional byproduct is manifested in more precise warning indicators that reduce the possibility of strategic surprise.

Implications for the Future—Challenges and Potential Courses of Action

While predicting where and when unrest will occur in Southeastern Europe is more difficult, this review and the events of the last ten years strongly suggest that Bulgaria and Romania are entering a precarious period and that significant concern over Romania's situation is warranted. Quick and marked economic improvement is critical to the continued stability of this region.

The importance of economic issues in prompting unrest throughout Eastern Europe should not be underestimated, particularly given the "political" nature of the 1989 Revolutions and the unrest in Bulgaria and Romania in early 1990s. Over half the unrest in both nations during and after the Cold War has been tied to bread and butter issues. A former low-level Solidarity member spoke for many East Europeans when she stated: "We wanted better money, improved work safety, a free trade union and my job back. Nobody wanted a revolution. And when I see what the so-called revolution has brought—mass poverty, homelessness, self-styled capitalists selling off our plants and pocketing the money—I think we were right."¹⁴⁹

And economic conditions will get worse before they get better. During 1999, unemployment jumped from 8.8 to 11.3% in Romania and by 1.4% to 12.8 in Bulgaria.¹⁵⁰ Additional and more painful economic reforms are yet to come in each country.

Following a decade in which much was said but little was done, these economic reforms will be even less palatable and more difficult to endure.¹⁵¹ Particularly hard hit will be those who have been most active in opposition activity during and after the Cold War—miners and industrial workers. Large-scale unemployment and stagnant or declining wages in these sectors will prompt growing dissatisfaction and unrest. The rising prices and declining purchasing power that are likely to accompany these economic reforms will undoubtedly be less selective and therefore adversely affect nearly all levels of Bulgarian and Romanian society. These hardships will be even more painful and potentially dangerous given expectations that life would get better after the democratic opposition gained power in 1996.¹⁵²

Democracy's attraction has certainly faded in the decade since the Berlin Wall fell and the "grace period" afforded "democratic" governments has all but ended. As one East European scholar observed: "Democracy was understood not as an end in itself but as a means to higher living standards, like those of the West. The inability of democratic governments to transform the post-communist economies with the wave of the hand has fueled impatience and an unfocused radicalism."¹⁵³ Poland's former President, Lech Walsea, echoed this sentiment noting: "Society is interested in the system's effectiveness, not the beautiful assumptions behind it. Hence, a lot of my compatriots are very dissatisfied."¹⁵⁴

The political arena will undoubtedly offer additional challenges. The last two years, for instance, have witnessed growing fractiousness within the ruling party in Romania, with the Prime Minister discarded by his own party in December 1999.¹⁵⁵ A decision not to accept Bulgaria and Romania into NATO or the EU or even a significant postponement of the decision could significantly alter the political landscape in each country. Outside their borders, problems in Serbia, Kosovo, and Bosnia threaten renewed conflict and potential spillover violence.

Stability in Eastern Europe during the Cold War resulted in part from a tacit understanding between the communist authorities and the population which essentially guaranteed a minimum living standard and social security benefits in return for political passivity.¹⁵⁶ Gorbachev's efforts to replace this "agreement" in the late 1980s with a new social contract that provided greater economic opportunity and political participation in exchange for harder work and less economic security failed miserably.¹⁵⁷ No viable "contract" has emerged yet to fill this void, particularly in Bulgaria and Romania where the social fabric has been badly frayed. Continued instability is thus likely until the post-Cold War system—a democratic, market economy oriented society—begins to deliver its share or is replaced by another system, probably more authoritarian, that can. The key judgement advanced in the September 1989 NIE—*Gorbachev's Domestic Gambles and Instability in the USSR*—is even more valid today: "Allowing people freedom to protest without being able to redress their basic grievances is a recipe for escalating crises."¹⁵⁸ It also puts democracy on very shaky ground throughout Southeastern Europe. "A major obstacle to building democracy anywhere in the former Soviet bloc," a noted expert on the communist bloc recently observed, "is that many people there appear to be concerned more about what their governments can give them than about what control they have over those governments via democratic procedures."¹⁵⁹

Potential challenges to stability loom large in Bulgaria and Romania. These are further exacerbated by a diminished capacity by governments in both countries to inhibit and control unrest. Mechanisms to control the populace—like unrest itself—have evolved since the end of the Cold War. They are now less pervasive and overt. The governments in Southeastern Europe are also no longer aided by a popular fear of an all-powerful and knowing security force. The belief that everything was controlled frequently blocked East Europeans from acting.¹⁶⁰ No where was this more true than in Romania where belief in the omnipresence of the *Securitate's* surveillance was often as important as the actual capacity to intercept telephone calls.¹⁶¹ While the SRI—the successor to the *Securitate*—still monitors threats to “national security” a decade after Ceausescu’s ouster, this fear is gone.

Will Bulgaria or Romania experience political, social, or ethnic upheaval on the scale seen in 1989 in the next five years? Given the historical record of the decade of the 1990s, the most probable answer is that neither country will. As seen in neighboring Serbia, the prevailing sentiment remains against using violence to force change. In the words of one Balkan commentator: “Revolutions are usually bloody and people don’t want that,” particularly when “there’s no expectation that change would be for the better.”¹⁶² Therefore the most likely outcome is “more muddling through.”

But I believe there is only a slightly less than 50% chance that a major political crisis will erupt in Romania within the next five years. Such a crisis would probably occur after a period of extended and widespread labor and political unrest exacerbated by the government’s seeming unwillingness or inability to resolve key economic problems. A future crisis of this sort would probably lead to greater powers being returned to the country’s power ministries—Ministry of Interior and Defense—as well as to implementation of added media and political restrictions. A state of emergency—perhaps even martial law—could usher in a more authoritarian regime that would remain long after the “crisis” ended. An inkling of what to expect may have occurred in January 1999 as striking Jiu Valley coal miners clashed with and overran Ministry of Interior forces. Ultimately the Romanian military had to intervene to stop marching coal miners from reaching Bucharest.¹⁶³ A “fragmentation and chaos” scenario—comparable to Bosnia—seems less plausible given the smaller size of the ethnic Hungarian minority in Romania and the restraint NATO membership would have on any Hungarian desires to support Transylvanian autonomy or annexation.

What can be done to prevent the worst case scenario from playing out in Southeastern Europe? Virtually all are agreed that economic aid is the key to addressing the region’s multiple and most significant problems. The efforts of the Balkan Stability Pact are on target for the most part. But just as with ordnance in an air war, more aid needs to be put on “target,” faster, and with greater accuracy. Financial incentives should be used to spur the economic transition of key industries and benefit the groups who have and will remain centers of opposition in the next decade. It is imperative that there is a mechanism to support those displaced. There must be a positive, identifiable end state

to work towards as well. Uncertainty and fear are recipes for disaster as seen already in the Former Yugoslavia.

Beyond economic aid, preventing meltdown in Bulgaria and Romania will require continued interest and political engagement on the part of the West and, in particular, the United States. To reduce Western involvement at this critical stage would only deepen despair in the region and lay the groundwork for potential upheaval. Moreover, decisions on NATO and EU accession must be carefully weighed, linked as they are to public expectations in both countries.

This research effort has also made clear that effectively recognizing and responding to the problems confronting Bulgaria and Romania can only benefit from additional study of unrest in Southeastern Europe. Serious consideration should be given to raising the intelligence priority for Romania, especially during the next two years. Should additional US government assets be unavailable, innovative links to the academic community may provide a cost and manpower effective mechanism to enhance monitoring in a resource constrained environment. Grants directed to support research such as this effort could be used to glean and assess new materials that may emerge from Bulgarian and Romanian security service archives. Limited funding and manpower could likewise be used to maintain and update the post-Cold War unrest database and model developed in this study for Bulgaria and Romania. Such efforts are essential if the United States and its NATO allies are to aid in preventing a second, more violent eruption from engulfing Bulgaria and Romania and ending their journey towards democracy.

Appendix

Criteria for Inclusion in Unrest Database

General: This database is built on incidents identified and extracted from the United States Information Agency's Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) daily reports for the period 1 January 1990 to 31 December 1999. FBIS daily reports are English translations of written and spoken material from foreign radio and television broadcasts, news agency transmissions, magazines, and newspapers.

Incidents Included: Incidents were included if they were explicitly identified as or could be inferred to be protest actions. Data was collected on strikes, rallies, demonstrations, political violence (including sabotage, terrorism, politically motivated assassinations and assassination attempts), protest declarations, and other protest actions such as hunger strikes, blockades, or convoys.

Incidents/Activity Not Included: Meetings/conferences of political parties or groups (unless the group is illegal and thus the meeting is in defiance of the government and in violation of the law). Election rallies or meetings (unless anti-government protests erupt or anti-ethnic group/religious group statements or actions occur). Election violence is not included unless it is directed toward a government establishment/policy or another ethnic or religious group. News conferences, celebrations or rallies commemorating events (unless anti-government actions or anti-ethnic group actions occur), and parliamentary protest actions—boycotts, walkouts, condemnations/verbal protests, bomb threats and bombings (unless they are identified as anti-government or directed at a specific ethnic or religious group), and airline hijackings are excluded as well. Protest actions directed at other countries (unless these actions are focused on the policies of the host nation) and internally directed protests, i.e.-discord within a trade union, within a religious or ethnic group, are also not included.

Categories of Unrest Incidents:

Demonstrations, Rallies, and Protest Marches: Any gathering or march, whether spontaneous or planned that has the purpose of expressing dissatisfaction with a policy, action, or group or seeks to change a policy, action, or influence another group.

Other Protest Actions: This includes hunger strikes, sit-ins, blocking roads/rails/entry, road caravans, and unspecified protest actions designed to express dissatisfaction with a policy, action, or group or seeking to change a policy, action, or influence another group.

Violence: This encompasses political violence, including assassinations, coups, sabotage, and riots. Attempted violence, if linked with a political, ethnic, social, or religious cause, is also included, even if unsuccessful.

Protest Declarations/Petitions: Verbal or written communication identified as a protest action and directed toward a government, international, or other religious or ethnic authority with the intent of expressing dissatisfaction with a policy, action, or group or seeks to change a policy, action, or influence another group.

Strikes: Those labor actions proclaimed as strikes, including warning strikes, initiated to express dissatisfaction with a policy, action, or group or seeking to change a policy, action, or influence another group.

Terms¹⁶⁴Used:

Dissidence – A state of mind involving discontent or disaffection with the regime.

Resistance – Dissidence translated into action.

Active Resistance – Resistance, organized or unorganized, which expresses itself in positive acts against the regime. It may or may not involve violence, and may be conducted openly or clandestinely. It may take such forms as intelligence collection, psychological warfare, sabotage, guerrilla warfare, assistance in escape and evasion, open defiance of authority, or preparatory activity for any of the above. [For the post-Cold War period, only sabotage and open defiance of authority were used from this list.]

Passive Resistance – Resistance, organized or unorganized, which is conducted within the framework of the resister's normal life and duties, and involves deliberate nonperformance or malperformance of acts which would benefit the regime, or deliberate nonconformity with standards of conduct established by the regime. This included "sick outs," deliberate worker negligence, and non-attendance at communist party meetings.

End Notes

- ¹ See appendix for additional description of database as well as the incidents included and definitions used.
- ² Robin Okey, Eastern Europe 1740-1980 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 68-90.
- ³ Philip G. Eidelberg, The Great Romanian Peasant Revolt of 1907: Origins of a Modern Jacquerie (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974).
- ⁴ Okey, 86-90.
- ⁵ Charles & Barbara Jelavich, The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 135-40.
- ⁶ For a summary and discussion of the role played by the US intelligence community see Jim Marchio, "Resistance Potential and Rollback: US Intelligence and the Eisenhower's Policies Toward Eastern Europe, 1953-56," Intelligence and National Security, Vol 10, No.2 (April 1995), 219-241. An extended discussion of the Eisenhower Administration's policies toward Eastern Europe is contained in James D. Marchio, "Rhetoric and Reality: The Eisenhower Administration and Unrest in Eastern Europe, 1953-1959," Ph.D. diss., The American University, 1990. The intelligence community made considerable use of work done under contract by various universities. Georgetown University, for example, produced a series of monographs on each of the East European satellite nations, including Bulgaria and Rumania. Other efforts included the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for International Studies (CENIS), "The Vulnerability of the Soviet Union and Its European Satellites to Political Warfare", Vols I-V, July 1952, CD 385 Political Warfare 1952, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Record Group (RG) 330, Box 367, National Archives Washington D.C. (henceforth NAWDC); US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Tensions Within the Soviet Captive Countries, 7pt., 84th Congress, 1st sess., 1953-54. These studies appeared in the following order: Pt 1-Bulgaria; Pt2-Rumania; Pt 3-Soviet Zone of Germany; Pt4-Czechoslovakia; Pt 5-Poland; Pt 6-Albania; Pt 7-Hungary; National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) 10-55: "Anti-Communist Resistance Potential in the Sino-Soviet Bloc," 12 April 1955 and 4 Mar 1958 as well as NIEs 12-57, "Stability of the Soviet Structure," 19 Feb 1957, NIE 12-58, "Outlook for Stability in the Eastern Europe Satellites," 4 Feb 1958, and NIE 12-59, "Political Stability in the European Satellites," 11 Aug 1959, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, NAWDC.
- ⁷ For insight into the Reagan Administration's intentions and approach, see Caspar W. Weinberger, "How the East Was Won," Wall Street Journal, 9 Nov 1999.
- ⁸ A series of "vulnerability" studies on each of the Warsaw Pact nations were completed at the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) between 1985 and 1987. I was the primary author for three such studies: Romanian Vulnerability Study, March 1985, DDB-2260-218-85; Bulgarian Vulnerability Study, DDB-2260-16-85, November 1985; and Hungarian Vulnerability Study, DDB-2260-18-87, May 1987. I also drafted a monograph length study for the Director of Central Intelligence entitled, "Unrest Behind the Iron Curtain, 1945-1981: Causes and Consequences for U.S. Exploitation Efforts," June 1987. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have been submitted for each of these studies as well as on a study I co-authored at DIA—"Romania: Economic Downturn and Civil Unrest," DDB-1900-107-85, Dec 1985. The information used in this paper from these earlier studies was approved for public release as part of an unpublished paper I drafted entitled, "The Next Explosion in Eastern Europe: Cold War Lessons for the New World Order," May 1993.
- ⁹ Otto Ulc, "Pilsen: The Unknown Revolt," Problems of Communism 14 (May-June 1965), 46-49; Stefan Brant, The East German Rising: 17th June, 1953 (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957), Arnulf Baring, Uprising in East Germany: June 17, 1953 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972). For more recent scholarship on the 1953 East German uprising see: Christian Ostermann, "New Documents on the East German Uprising of 1953," Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) BULLETIN, Issue 5 (Spring 1995), 10-16, 57; and Ostermann, "This is Not A Politburo, But A Madhouse': The Post-Stalin Succession Struggle, Soviet *Deutschlandpolitik* and the SED: New Evidence from Russian, German, and Hungarian Archives," CWIHP BULLETIN 10 (March 1998), 61-110.
- ¹⁰ Georgetown University, Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Bulgaria, (Project A-394, 1 Sep 1957), 19-33; Georgetown University, Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, (Project A-1570, 15 Aug 1958), 8-9, US Army Military History Institute (MHI), Carlisle Barracks, PA.

- ¹¹ Georgetown University, Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Bulgaria, 21; Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, 19-23.
- ¹² NIE 10-58, "Anti-Communist Resistance Potential in the Sino-Soviet Bloc," 4 March 1958, 2.
- ¹³ CWIHP *BULLETIN*, Issue 5, 10-15.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 11-13.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 55.
- ¹⁸ For the role of Radio Free Europe, see Alan Michie, Voices Through the Iron Curtain: The Radio Free Europe Story (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1963) and Sig Mickelson, America's Other Voice: The Story of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty (New York: Praeger, 1983).
- ¹⁹ Csaba Bekes, "New Findings on the 1956 Hungarian Revolution," CWIHP *BULLETIN*, Issue 2 (Fall 1992), 1-3; United Nations, Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary, General Assembly, Official Records: Eleventh Session, Supplement No. 18 (A/3592), New York, 1957, 10-12.
- ²⁰ Mark Kramer, translation and annotation, "The 'Malin Notes' on the Crises in Hungary and Poland, 1956," CWIHP *BULLETIN*, Issue 8-9 (Winter 1996/97), 398-408.
- ²¹ Georgetown University, Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, 28-35.
- ²² Georgetown University, Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Bulgaria, 31-33.
- ²³ US Embassy Bucharest reported in December 1956 that attache travel in Rumania is still forbidden. An ONI report further noted: "Although Rumania appears outwardly calm, it is reported that Rumanian Army Ammunition is being heavily guarded by trusted Communist government officials. Additional Soviet troops are apparently moving into Transylvania. . . . The explosive potentiality of the ethnic Hungarian situation in Transylvania and the known dissatisfaction of the Rumanian people as a whole makes continued tight security measures essential if the Communists are to remain in power." Naval Historical Center, Operational Archives Branch, Post 1 January 1946 Command File, Folder-ONI Review Vol XII (Jan '57-Dec '57), Dec 1956 ONI Review, 523.
- ²⁴ For recently released material on the Prague Spring, see Jaromir Navratil, compiler and ed., et al., The Prague Spring 1968: A National Security Archive Document Reader (Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 1998).
- ²⁵ RFE, RAD Background Report, "Poland: The End of the Post-October Era," 5 April 1968.
- ²⁶ Tufton Beamish and Guy Hadley, The Kremlin's Dilemma: The Struggle for Human Rights in Eastern Europe (San Rafael, Ca: Presidio Press, 1979), 29.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 32-34.
- ²⁸ In Poland, one of the first manifestations of post-Helsinki dissent appeared in September 1976 as 14 intellectuals formed a human rights watch group called the Committee for the Defense of the Workers (KOR). Although initially set up to help defend workers being tried for their role in the June 1976 food riots in Radom, Poland, the organization soon expanded its purview to include efforts to protect and advance the human rights of all elements of the Polish populace. East Germany was the next country in which dissent erupted in the fall of 1976. Here, much as in Poland, a small group of intellectuals took the lead, issuing public criticism of the government's expatriation of dissident ballad singer Wolf Bierman. Also becoming apparent at this time was the dissent expressed by over 100,000 East Germans who had applied for exist visa applications in the 18 months since the ratification of the Helsinki Accords.
- ²⁹ Radio Free Europe, "Czechoslovak Dissent: Sources and Aims," (RAD Background Report/143, 29 June 1978), 3.
- ³⁰ For an excellent discussion of dissent in Romania and the challenges it posed for the Ceausescu regime, see Dennis Deletant, Ceausescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965-1989 (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), 235-93.
- ³¹ The June 1976 riots did not occur in a vacuum. One of the most serious outbursts of labor unrest in Poland's history had erupted along its Baltic Coast six years earlier. Sparked by sharp price increases just prior to the Christmas holidays, protests began in Gdansk and turned violent. Four days of disturbances ensued, with unrest spreading to three other cities along the Baltic Coast. While regime promises to correct past errors temporarily ended the violence, a new round of labor unrest began shortly after the New Year, with protests erupting in the large industrial town of Lodz as well. See Jakub Karpinski, Count-Down: The Polish Upheavals of 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976, 1980 (New York: Karz-Cohl Publishers, Inc., 1982), 71-73.
- ³² Radio Free Europe, "Eyewitness on the 1977 Miner's Strike in Romania's Jiu Valley" (RAD Background Report/110, 13 August 1986); Deletant, 243-46.

³³ The strike committees greatly helped in planning and coordinating protest actions and thus were able to bring considerable pressure to bear on the Polish regime. In that sense they presented a much more serious challenge to the communist authorities than had the isolated labor unrest of the past. See Karpinski, 201-202.

³⁴ David S. Mason, "The Regime, and the Public," Soviet Studies 20 (October 1983), 537.

³⁵ Zbigniew Bujak, a former high ranking member of Solidarity observed in a recent interview: "From the very early hours of martial law, those people pressed for armed resistance. We very quick came to the conclusion that we could not, that we could use only leaflets and books. But we also had to make sure no one else started fighting." See Roger Cohen, "Adam Michnik's Post-Communist Adventure," New York Times Magazine, 7 November 1999, 78.

³⁶ Deletant, 20.

³⁷ *Ibid.* Approximately 20% of the unrest incidents during the 1970s and 80s in Romania had an ethnic basis.

³⁸ Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, 46-47.

³⁹ F. Stephen Larrabee, "Instability and Change in the Balkans," Survival, Vol. 34, No.2, (Summer 1992): 37; Daniel L. Nelson, "Balkan Insecurities," 92, in Michta, Andrew A. & Ilya Prizel, eds., Post Communist Eastern Europe: Crisis and Reform, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992); Janusz Bugajski, Nations in Turmoil: Conflict and Cooperation in Eastern Europe (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993): 171-77; Stephen I. Griffiths, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict: Threats to European Security, SIPRI Research Report No.5 (London: Oxford University Press, 1993): 36; Ivaylo Grouev, "The Bulgarian Model, Recent Developments in the Ethnic Landscape: An Interview with Mr. Ahmed Dogan, Chairman of the Movements for Rights and Freedoms," European Security, Vol.6, No.2 (Summer 1997), 85.

⁴⁰ Bulgaria is the only exception to this trend. The 1984-85 "assimilation" campaign was conducted with such violence that ethnic Turks responded in kind. Riots and political violence were the weapons of choice during this two-year period, accounting for nearly 60-70% of the unrest detected.

⁴¹ NIE 10-58, 16-18, 84-86; Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, 37-63; Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Bulgaria, 15-33.

⁴² J.L. Kerr, "Dissidence in Bulgaria," Radio Free Europe Research, RFE Background Report/156, 10 Jul 1978; Deletant, 235-93.

⁴³ Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Bulgaria, 28-33; Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, 22-23, 37; Marchio, "The Next Explosion in Eastern Europe: Cold War Lessons for the New World Order."

⁴⁴ This correlation was determined by first tabulating unrest incidents by county in each country and comparing the counties with the greatest and least unrest during each period.

⁴⁵ Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Bulgaria, 28-33; Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, 22-23, 37; Marchio, "The Next Explosion in Eastern Europe: Cold War Lessons for the New World Order."

⁴⁶ NIE 10-58, "Anti-Communist Resistance Potential in the Sino-Soviet Bloc," 4 Mar 1958.

⁴⁷ NIE 11/12-9-88: "Soviet Policy Toward Eastern Europe Under Gorbachev," in Benjamin B. Fischer, ed. At Cold War's End: US Intelligence on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, 1989-1991 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1999), 151-77.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 168.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 155, 174.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 155, 171

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 171-72.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 155, 170.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁵⁴ See Martyn Rady, Causes and Consequences of the Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe (Austin, Tx: Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers, 1996); Bernard Harbor, Conflict in Eastern Europe (New York: New Discovery Books, 1993); Mark Almond, The Rise and Fall of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu (London: Chapmans, 1992); Stephen R. Bowers "The East European Revolution," East European Quarterly, XXV, No.2 (June 1991), 129-43.

⁵⁵ Rady, 35.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

- ⁵⁷ Jefim Fistein, "Poland: Anti-Communist Movement Showed the Way," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 4 November 1999, at <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.
- ⁵⁸ "Memorandum of Conversation between M.S. Gorbachev and Karoly Grosz, General Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, Moscow, 23-24 March 1989," in "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives Reveal Why There Was No Crackdown on the Revolutions of 1989," National Security Archive, "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives," at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsaarchiv/news/19991105/index.html>
- ⁵⁹ "Opening Full Session of the National Roundtable Negotiations," 13 June 1989, in "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives Reveal Why There Was No Crackdown on the Revolutions of 1989," National Security Archive, "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives," at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsaarchiv/news/19991105/index.html>
- ⁶⁰ Rady, 35.
- ⁶¹ Ibid, 36.
- ⁶² Harbor, 12-13.
- ⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁶⁴ Roger Cohen, "Haphazardly, Berlin Wall Fell a Decade Ago," *New York Times*, 9 November 1999.
- ⁶⁵ Jolyon Naegele, "The Velvet Revolution: A Chronology," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 17 November 1999, at <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid., Rady, 37-38; "Speech by Premier Ladislav Adamec at an extraordinary session of the CPCz CC" 24 November 1989," in "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives Reveal Why There Was No Crackdown on the Revolutions of 1989," National Security Archive, "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives," at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsaarchiv/news/19991105/index.html>.
- ⁶⁷ Rady, 40, Anthony Georgieff, "Bulgaria: Communism Has Stumbled, Not Fallen," and Ron Synovitz, "Bulgaria: 'Revolution' Was Coup Within Communist Party," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," November 1999, at <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>
- ⁶⁸ NIE 11/12-9-88, "Soviet Policy Toward Eastern Europe Under Gorbachev," in Fischer, 169.
- ⁶⁹ Almond, 180-82.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., 193-96.
- ⁷¹ For a discussion of Ceausescu's policies in the decade before the 1989 Revolution, see Almond, 172-223, and Deletant, 248-332. A concise description of the factors behind the 1989 Revolutions across Eastern Europe is found in Bowers, 129-43.
- ⁷² Jeremy Bransten, "Romania: The Bloody Revolution in 1989," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 14 December 1999, at <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.
- ⁷³ Deletant, 368.
- ⁷⁴ NIE 11/12-9-88: "Soviet Policy Toward Eastern Europe Under Gorbachev," 158; Bowers, 131-32.
- ⁷⁵ Peter Rutland, "The Revolutions of 1989 Reconsidered," *Current History* (April 1999), 152.
- ⁷⁶ NIE 11/12-9-88: "Soviet Policy Toward Eastern Europe Under Gorbachev," 158.
- ⁷⁷ Bowers, 131-32.
- ⁷⁸ Recently declassified and released material from the Czech archives reveals that Czechoslovak Premier Adamec was concerned about the risks of using repression to quell unrest: "But experience with administrative measures has shown a significant risk. After a certain period the situation could explode again, bringing on another crisis, with still more unpredictable results." He made clear his preference for a political solution and warned of the international sanctions that would be imposed if force was used.
- ⁷⁹ Cohen, "Haphazardly, Berlin Wall Fell a Decade Ago."
- ⁸⁰ Naegele, "The Velvet Revolution: A Chronology."
- ⁸¹ Rady, 38.
- ⁸² David Fromkin, "Nothing Behind the Wall," *New York Times*, 7 November 1999.
- ⁸³ NIE 11/12-9-88: "Soviet Policy Toward Eastern Europe Under Gorbachev," 163.
- ⁸⁴ Thomas Blanton, "When did the Cold War End?" *CWIHP BULLETIN* 10 (March 1998), 184; Bowers, 136.
- ⁸⁵ Vernon A. Walters, "What I Saw at the Revolution," *Wall Street Journal Europe*, 4 November 1999.

- ⁸⁶ Debate continues on Gorbachev's decision not to use force to maintain Communism in Eastern Europe. Recently opened archive material from these countries offer valuable insights. For instance, a memorandum of conversation between Gorbachev and Karoly Grosz, General Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, 23-24 Mar 1989, highlights Gorbachev's contradictions as he asserts that the Brezhnev doctrine is dead while trying to establish boundaries for change in the region. See National Security Archive, "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives," at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsaarchiv/news/19991105/index.html>. Others remain perplexed as to Gorbachev's reasoning. Why the Soviets gave up Eastern Europe without a fight remains, to a degree, unanswered. As the Central Committee's Valentin Falin said: "We are still waiting for the answer to that from Gorbachev....He confided in no one." found in At the Cold War's End: US Intelligence on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, 1989-1991, xix, xxv; Jeremy Bransten, "USSR: The Year 1989 Foreshadowed The Fall," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 6 October 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.
- ⁸⁷ Robert Hutchings, "An American Perspective on Today's Europe," Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, 24 November 1999, at <http://wwics.si.edu/NEWS/hutchings.htm>.
- ⁸⁸ Speech by Premier Ladislav Adamec at an extraordinary session of the CPCz CC" 24 November 1989," in "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives Reveal Why There Was No Crackdown on the Revolutions of 1989," National Security Archive, "New Documents from Soviet/East Europe Archives," at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsaarchiv/news/19991105/index.html>
- ⁸⁹ Naegele, "The Velvet Revolution: A Chronology."
- ⁹⁰ Bowers, 135.
- ⁹¹ Ibid.; The inability of the Polish Communist Party to control television fully and its television policy was a contributing factor in the collapse of the regime of the Polish socialist state. The event that broke Polish TV was Pope John Paul II's visit in June 1979. Polish TV's awkward and clumsy attempt to censor the visit was taken by Polish viewers as a distasteful symbol of the government's falsehood. See Robert M. Ponichtera, "One More Reason for Communism's Collapse: Television in Poland, 1951-1989," East European Studies, Meeting Report #146, 12 November 1997, Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, at <http://wwics.si.edu/PROGRAMS/REGION/eec/meetingrep/146ponic.html>.
- ⁹² See Roger Cohen, "Adam Michnik's Post-Communist Adventure," New York Times Magazine, 7 November 1999, 73.
- ⁹³ John Tirman, "How We Ended the Cold War," The Nation, 1 November 1999.
- ⁹⁴ Hutchings, "An American Perspective on Today's Europe."
- ⁹⁵ Fear forced most Czechoslovak citizens to lead a double life: a private life of home and weekend cottage, of trusted friends and personal interests—and a public life: job and daily contacts with people who might possibly be working for the secret police. See Jolyon Naegele, "Czech Republic: Velvet Revolution—The Dissipation of Fear," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," November 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.
- ⁹⁶ Jolyon Naegele, "Czech Republic: Velvet Revolution—The Road to Freedom," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," November 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.
- ⁹⁷ Rady, 36.
- ⁹⁸ Cohen, "Haphazardly, Berlin Wall Fell a Decade Ago."
- ⁹⁹ Jeremy Bransten, "Romania: 1989's Bloody Revolution – Chaos As The Ceausescu's Are Executed," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 14 December 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.
- ¹⁰⁰ Fischer, xvii.
- ¹⁰¹ Marchio, "The Next Explosion in Eastern Europe: Cold War Lessons for the New World Order," Unpublished paper, May 1993.
- ¹⁰² Deletant, 342-69; Almond, 224-36.
- ¹⁰³ Similar carryover was noted in the German Democratic Republic as well. Marchio, "The Next Explosion in Eastern Europe: Cold War Lessons for the New World Order"; Deletant, 369.
- ¹⁰⁴ NIE 12-90, "The Future of Eastern Europe," in Fischer, 181.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 183.
- ¹⁰⁶ Grouev, 84-85; Larrabee, 31; Bowers, 141; Griffiths, 23-24, 36-37; Bugajski, 163-68, 171-76.
- ¹⁰⁷ Larrabee, 37; Bowers, 141.
- ¹⁰⁸ Larrabee, 31.

¹⁰⁹ This database is built on incidents identified and extracted from the United States Information Agency's Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) daily reports for the period 1 January 1990 to 31 December 1999. FBIS daily reports are English translations of written and spoken material from foreign radio and television broadcasts, news agency transmissions, magazines, and newspapers. Incidents were included if they were explicitly identified as or could be inferred to be protest actions. Data was collected on strikes, rallies, demonstrations, political violence (including sabotage, terrorism, assassinations), protest declarations, and other protest actions such as hunger strikes, blockades, or convoys. Parliamentary protests, such as walkouts, no-confidence votes, and election rallies and declarations were excluded. I recognize that this database is incomplete. Despite a thorough review of daily FBIS reports and other open source reporting for the entire decade, gaps in the unrest data undoubtedly exist. In all likelihood, more unrest probably occurred than I have uncovered. The database also is probably biased in that reporting was more extensive and detailed in certain areas than in others. I have tried to compensate for these gaps and bias by taking multiple looks at the issue of unrest over five decades and using a variety of secondary sources to substantiate trends identified from the data.

¹¹⁰ During the period 1977-1985, approximately 250 incidents were noted for both countries. For the period 1951-57, approximately 500 incidents were reported.

¹¹¹ Identified unrest incidents jumped from 35 in 1997 to 62 in 1998. This upward trend continued in 1999, with 83 incidents noted.

¹¹² The percentage breakout by type of incident for the 1951-57 and 1977-1985 periods, see Jim Marchio, "The Next Explosion in Eastern Europe: Cold War Lessons for the New World Order," May 1993. Percentages cited for the 1990s are based on the incident database constructed for Bulgaria and Romania.

¹¹³ Romanian demonstrators, for instance, occupied University Square in Bucharest from 22 Apr 1990 until they were violently driven out in mid-June by Jiu Valley miners, allegedly at the behest of President Iliescu. In Bulgaria, students and opposition elements constructed "Cities of Truth" in several cities throughout Bulgaria, occupying central squares and carrying-out various protest actions for close to two months.

¹¹⁴ For a description of the 1977 Jiu Valley miners' strike, see Deletant, 243-46, Almond, 121-23, and Vladimir Socor, "Eyewitness on the 1977 Miners' Strike in Romania's Jiu Valley," Radio Free Europe Research, RAD Background Report/110, 13 Aug 1986. The Polish trade union Solidarity's strikes during 1980 and 1981 are the only examples of extended unrest in Eastern Europe, outside the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

¹¹⁵ Passive resistance was commonly defined as any action taken to express dissatisfaction or hinder the designs of the communist regime and performed during the course of an individual's daily existence. This included "sick outs," deliberate worker negligence, and non-attendance at communist party meetings. For discussion of passive resistance in both Bulgaria and Romania, see NIE 10-58 "Anti-Communist Resistance Potential in the Sino-Soviet Bloc," 4 May 1958, 18-19 and 87-88.

¹¹⁶ This percentage is probably even higher given that a number of the incidents listed as "unknown" in my database for the 1990s were probably linked to economic factors. Despite the lack of a specific demand, the timing, location, and participants suggest economic motives.

¹¹⁷ This figure represents the average for the decade, an average that hides significant variation. For example, while fifty-one ethnic related incidents (39%) were noted in 1991, only 17 additional ethnic incidents were identified for the remaining years.

¹¹⁸ Larrabee, 31; Deletant, 396-97.

¹¹⁹ The most significant of these ethnic flare-ups occurred in 1995, with at least twenty ethnic related unrest incidents. These incidents largely involved the proposed education law submitted to the Romanian Parliament and alleged discrimination toward ethnic Hungarians.

¹²⁰ Unrest incidents linked to political issues peaked in 1990 and 1991, accounting for more than 33% of the overall unrest in Bulgaria. In subsequent years, excluding 1997 when protests generated by the collapse of the banking system and hyper-inflation forced the Bulgarian Socialist Party from power, political issues were identified in only 15% of incidents.

¹²¹ Students and other largely non-communist elements conducted major demonstrations and nationwide strikes in each country before and following presidential and parliamentary elections in 1990. For Romania, unrest culminated in the 13-15 June 1990 riots that swept Bucharest. While less violent, similar significant, widespread protests began Bulgaria in July 1990 and lasted until well into the fall.

¹²² Religious issues were identified as the primary factor in only 5 incidents (less than 1/2 of 1%) during the 1990s. This represents a sharp decline from the late Cold War, when religion accounted for over 5% of the

identified unrest. See US Department of State, Human Rights Reports for 1999: Bulgaria, 25 February 2000, 19-20, at http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/.

¹²³ The implementation of the Land Liquidation Act in Bulgaria, including the appointment of Land Liquidation Councils, generated at least 27 incidents over the course of these two years, 12% of the incident total for this period.

¹²⁴ Most of these incidents occurred between 1990 and 1994 and, although noted, were not included in the unrest database. Only protest actions that were directed at the Romanian government as well as at another party--the USSR, Ukraine, Moldavia, or the UN-- were counted.

¹²⁵ Ecoglasnost in Bulgaria was particularly active in 1990, organizing and leading a number of protest actions directed at the Bulgarian and Romanian governments demanding action to clean up pollution from the industrial sites in Giurgiu, the Romanian city on the Danube opposite Ruse. Other protests centered on the Bulgarian nuclear power plant at Svishtov.

¹²⁶ This carryover is seen as well when the hotspot list is expanded to 10 areas.

¹²⁷ In both Bulgaria and Romania, virtually no unrest was noted in at least one third of the same counties during each time period.

¹²⁸ Georgetown University, Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, 51.

¹²⁹ Over 70% of the unrest incidents in each country are linked to these groups. Moreover, this relationship has been strengthened as the decade has progressed, due in part to decreased importance of political and ethnic issues and worsening economic conditions.

¹³⁰ Only one unrest incident involving the Roma was noted in Romania while three were identified in Bulgaria between 1991 and 1999. These insignificant numbers probably reflect the continued lack of political consciousness among the Roma as well as efforts by authorities in Sofia and Bucharest to address western human rights concerns over the treatment of the Roma in each country. See US Department of State, Human Rights Reports for 1999: Bulgaria, 25 February 2000, 20-22, at http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/; and US Department of State, Human Rights Reports for 1999: Romania, 25 February 2000, 10-17, at http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/.

¹³¹ Strikes, rallies and demonstrations as well as declarations and other protest actions were used throughout the 1990s by a variety of groups heretofore considered the communist establishment--from the party's socialist successors to groups within the Ministry of Interior and Defense. Discontent and protest was particularly prominent during 1991 and 1992 when significant reductions were being made to both national and internal security forces.

¹³² This absence is probably explained in part by less visible participation in established political parties, emigration to the West, and their own success in institutionalizing democratic processes.

¹³³ Communist authorities were very effective in playing upon fears of Hungarian revanchism during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution to help quell rumblings inside Romania. See Resistance Factors and Special Forces Areas-Rumania, 25-26. By 1989, however, these fears were largely overridden by widespread hatred of the Ceausescu regime. See Almond, 201-02.

¹³⁴ Despite concerted efforts by both the Hungarian and Romanian governments to improve relations, tensions have arisen over a variety of issues ranging from the dedication of a "Reconciliation Park" in the Romanian city of Arad to the most recent toxic wastes spills. See Radio Free Europe, Southeastern Europe Daily Report, 4 Oct 1999.

¹³⁵ FBIS, East European Daily Report, Romania, "Minorities Account for Majority of Emigrants," 31 July 1992; and East European Daily Report, Bulgaria, "Migration of Ethnic Turks From Kurdzhali Continues," 5 Aug 1992.

¹³⁶ Newspapers in Bulgaria and Romania repeatedly protested paper shortages and prices, alleging that the regimes were seeking to curb free speech. For a representative sample of such protests, see FBIS, East European Daily Report, Romania, 12 Dec 1991 and Bulgaria, 13 Feb 1991. Romanian authorities have also been cited for using intimidation and violence to silence opposition voices. See Jeremy Bransten, "Romania: The Bloody Revolution in 1989 - Historic Facts Remain Obscured," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 15 December 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.

¹³⁷ Grouev, 86-89.

¹³⁸ As far as economic reform goes, most of the years since 1989 have been wasted. According to Eugen Chirovici, editor-in-chief of *Curierul National*, a leading Romanian economic daily: "Most IMF and World Bank loans--the government's main creditors--were spent on buying consumer goods, through non-

transparent channels, to keep social tensions down.” See Jeremy Bransten, “Romania: The Bloody Revolution in 1989 – 10 Years After Public Disillusion Prevails,” Radio Free Europe Special Report: “Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe,” 15 December 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>. Unemployment jumped from 8.8 to 11.3% in Romania in 1999 and by 1.4% to 12.8 in Bulgaria. The sense of relative deprivation is more important than that of absolute deprivation. See Michael Shafir, “Radical Politics in East-Central Europe, Part III: X-Raying Post-Communist ‘Radical Minds’,” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty *East European Perspectives*, (1 December 1999, Vol 1, no. 3), 6.

¹³⁹ Bransten, “Romania: The Bloody Revolution in 1989 – 10 Years After Public Disillusion Prevails.”

¹⁴⁰ In 1989-94, Bulgaria achieved an ethnic balance and avoided the escalation of ethnic tensions into open conflict primarily because its main political actors agreed to grant a collective political right to the Turkish minority. The fact that Bulgaria’s leaders were eager to join the West gave added weight to consideration of ethnic rights, which were part of the CSCE/OSCE basket on human rights. The Turkish minority party—Movement for Rights and Freedoms—became a means to champion such rights and a vehicle for political dialogue and compromise on these issues. Another paradox of post-communist Bulgarian politics was that the MRF has come to hold the balance of power in the multi-party system and has become a guarantor of internal stability peace, making Bulgarian politics a unique and special case in the general pattern of Balkan ethnic politics. See Grouev, 84-86.

¹⁴¹ When democratic forces regained the upper hand and President Constantinescu replaced Iliescu in 1996, many hoped things would finally change; but the team that came to power in 1996 found the old structures—economically and administratively—to be very strong. See Bransten, “Romania: The Bloody Revolution in 1989 – Historic Facts Remain Obscured,” Radio Free Europe Special Report: “Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe,” 15 December 1999, at:

<http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.

¹⁴² Brent Scowcroft, “Intelligence is Not a Crystal Ball,” *The Washington Post*, 12 January 2000.

¹⁴³ See Stanley A. Feder, “Factions and Policon: New Ways to Analyze Politics,” in Bradford E.

Westerfield, ed., *Inside CIA’s Private World: Declassified Articles from the Agency’s Internal Journal, 1955-1992*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 274-292. In factions theory, the potential set of policy or leadership choice issues is identified along with the key actors for a particular scenario. The support given by one actor to another is then determined by an equation where $A = (A's \text{ resources}) \times (\text{salience of issue to } A) \times (A's \text{ utility for } B's \text{ position})$. In Expected Utility Theory, groups that have a lot to gain by challenging others probably will initiate action. Groups that support different positions and believe they each have something to gain on an issue are likely to find themselves in conflict with each other. Every actor is assumed to face the decision problem of whether to influence the other actors to accept the policy preferred by the first. The expected outcome is the sum of each outcome times the probability of its occurring. (Potential Outcome X probability of it occurring) + (Potential Outcome X probability of it occurring), etc. = Expected Outcome

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 290-91.

¹⁴⁵ This model was developed and included as part of an unpublished monograph done under the auspices of the Director of Central Intelligence Exceptional Analyst Program. See Capt Jim Marchio, “Unrest Behind the Iron Curtain, 1945-1981: Causes and Consequences for U.S. Exploitation Efforts”(U), June 1987.

¹⁴⁶ The reasoning underlying the model bears further explanation. While economic conditions were consistently identified as the best predictor for civil unrest in Eastern Europe since the end of the Second World War, other economic factors were instrumental in prompting or hindering the outbreak of anti-regime activity. The developmental stage a particular country’s economy was in, for example, partially determines the amount of social mobility present in that society. For much of Eastern Europe, but especially in Bulgarian and Romania, the rapid industrialization of the 1950s and 1960s produced considerable economic and social opportunity for the largely peasant population. This opportunity in turn served to raise the populace’s standard of living and prevent economic frustrations from reaching dangerous levels. In a similar fashion, the type of economic system prevailing in a country could act as a safety valve. Hungary’s adoption of a “mixed” economy in the 1970s, where some private enterprise was permitted, allowed workers and other segments of the populace to earn extra income and thereby maintain a relatively high standard of living despite the Hungarian economy’s lackluster performance. International influences and internal politics, as noted in chapters one and two, were likewise critical in spurring or impeding unrest in Eastern Europe. While not as significant, societal factors are an integral part of the

unrest environment. These factors determine the potential for unrest in a specific country. The presence of a large unassimilated ethnic group, such as in Bulgaria and Romania, increases the potential for ethnic unrest. In a similar manner, the presence of a closely knit community or even large numbers of a group historically associated with unrest activity, like industrial workers, enhances the potential for unrest. Conversely, a sizable group with vested interests in the continued existence of the social system, such as the military, security personnel, and Communist Party bureaucrats, reduced the chances of anti-regime activity reaching significant proportions. Educational levels can also facilitate or inhibit the emergence of anti-regime activity. Previous scholarship has shown an association between higher educational levels and a willingness to challenge the government authorities. Lower educational levels, such as among the peasantry, have had the opposite effect. Psychological and volatility factors can have either a negative or positive effect on anti-regime activity. Nationalism is easily the most important of the psychological factors. It played a key role in spurring unrest in Poland and Hungary throughout the Cold War. In other stances where conflicting nationalism exists, it can be equally effective in dampening opposition activity. This was true in Romania during the fall of 1956 and even in Czechoslovakia 12 years later when the Soviets played upon Slovak and Czech tensions to divide and suppress opposition to their intervention. Historical influences and the outcome of previous disturbances work in both directions as well, as has noted previously. Similarly, societal expectations and the media have been very important in shaping the unrest environment. Both factors serve as multipliers, playing upon existing dissatisfaction. Lastly, volatility factors are the catalysts that transform an otherwise apolitical populace into a revolutionary mass. Some incident or issue served to ignite the unrest in almost every mass disturbance examined.

¹⁴⁷ US Department of State, Human Rights Reports for 1999: Romania, 25 February 2000, 14, at http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/1999/.

¹⁴⁸ "10 Years After Revolt, Little Glee in Romania," *New York Times*, 23 Dec 1999; Blagovesta Doncheva, "In Bulgaria, 10 Years of Misery," *New York Times*, 11 Nov 1999.

¹⁴⁹ See Cohen, "Adam Michnik's Post-Communist Adventure," 72.

¹⁵⁰ Shafir, 6.

¹⁵¹ Breffini O'Rourke, "Ten Years On: Economic Vision Still Not Reality," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 8 October 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>. According to Jeremy Bransten, "The previous administration's massive borrowing from abroad, coupled with a lack of economic reform and the continued subsidizing of unprofitable enterprises, has saddled the government with a huge burden. Romania must now cut subsidies and institute austerity measures, while repaying foreign loans." And most economists believe that Romania will have to wait a couple of years for the belt-tightening to start paying off. See Jeremy Bransten, "Romania: The Bloody Revolution in 1989 – 10 Years After Public Disillusion Prevails," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 15 December 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.

¹⁵² Jeremy Bransten, "Romania: The Bloody Revolution In 1989: Communist, Ion Iliescu, Tells His Story," Radio Free Europe Special Report: "Ten Years After: The Fall of Communism in East Central Europe," 15 December 1999, at: <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/10years/index.html>.

¹⁵³ Shafir, 7. This same view was advanced in a *New York Times* article marking the 10 year anniversary of the "Velvet Revolution. "They have all found," the journalist noted, "that freedom of speech and a free vote do not easily translate into wealth, foreign investment or happiness, that totalitarian habits of mind die hard and that Western Europe, with its own division and economic problems, is in no hurry to bring EE into full membership in the EU." See Steven Erlanger, "A Decade After Triumph, Havel Is Crushed Velvet," 4 November 1999.

¹⁵⁴ Cohen, "Adam Michnik's Post-Communist Adventure," 81.

¹⁵⁵ The dismissal of Romania's Prime Minister in December 1999 in flagrant disregard for the Romanian constitution and is in keeping with the flawed nature of Romanian democracy. But his dismissal highlights the political chaos and instability in Romania. See Michael Shafir, "Romania's Constitutional Crisis," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty *Newsline*, Endnote, 15 December 1999.

¹⁵⁶ A similar social-economic contract helped ensure ethnic stability in Yugoslavia for three decades under Tito. See James D. Fearon, "Was Tito's Way the Best Way to Keep Peace?" *Los Angeles Times*, 5 September 1999.

¹⁵⁷ SOV 89-10077, CIA "Gorbachev's Domestic Gambles and Instability in the USSR," in Fischer, 43.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁵⁹ Paul Goble, "Entitlements, Rights, and Democracy," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newsline, End Note, 4 October 1999.

¹⁶⁰ Roger Cohen, "Big Brother Is Still Haunting Society in Germany's East," New York Times, 29 November 1999.

¹⁶¹ Almond, 127.

¹⁶² Helena Smith, "Milosevic Shows His Staying Power," Washington Times, 13 January 2000

¹⁶³ See Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Special Report on the "Romanian Miners' Strike," 17 February 1999, at <http://www.rferl.org/nca/special/minerstrike/index.html>.

¹⁶⁴ These terms and definitions are taken from NIE 10-58 "Anti—Communist Resistance Potential in the Sino-Soviet Bloc," 4 May 1958.

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